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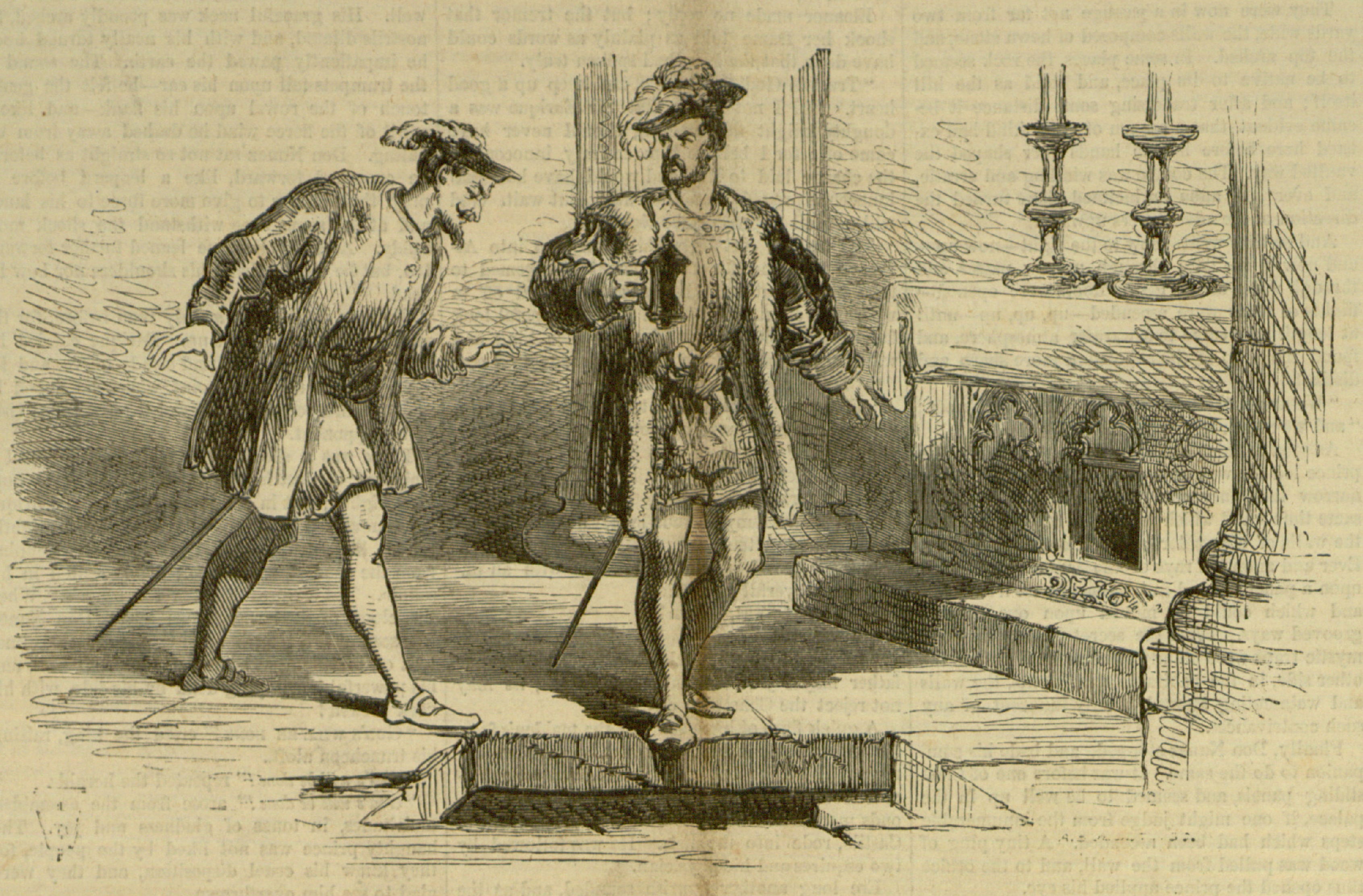

THE SECRET PASSAGE.

TO A LATE DAISY.

BY ALICE CARY.

Little daisy, go to bed,—
I hear the winds say as they pass,
"Draw your white face under th' grass—
Make of the leaves about you spread,
Brown and yellow, a coverlet."
Little daisy, go to bed!

Without either sigh or tear,
Little daisy, say good-bye
To your sweetheart up in th' sky—
He will come again next year,
And your sisters will appear
All attired in dainty white—
Kiss him now, and say good-night.

Early in the month of May,
When the willow trims her head,
Round and round with tassels gay,
You shall have a wedding-day,
And the clover's angry-red
All shall turn to see you wed,
So in patience go to bed.

Then in every leafy bush
There shall be a rustling sweet,
And your pleasure to complete,
When you with your lover meet,
With a sympathetic blush
Each young rose your joy will greet;
So to bed away, away!
ud be ready for the May.

THE LOST TREASURE;

OR,

THE CHAMPION OF CASTILE.

A TALE OF SPAIN IN THE OLDEN TIME.

BY SYLVANUS COBB, JR

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CHAPTER XIII.

THE CHALLENGE.—MIGUEL MARTELLO.

The king sat in his upper audience-chamber, where matters of a private character were usually disposed of, and with him were the noble dons, Rodrigo de Padillo, Carlos d'Arrelano, Garcia de Castro, and Alvarez de Haro, all of them captains of Castile, and true and worthy knights. They gazed upon each other, and upon the monarch, with inquiring looks, for they knew not why they had been called. Presently the page entered and announced that Don Nunez de Castaneda was in waiting.

"A moment," said Alfonso; and then turning to his friends, he added—

"I have called you to be witnesses of a strange scene. There may be a challenge given here, and I have deemed it advisable to have it given in the presence of other knights than those immediately interested. You may stand on one side. Now, Pedro, send him hither."

The page retired, and very soon the Prince Nunez entered. He cast a quick glance of apprehension towards the four stout knights, but he overcame all outward show of uneasiness, and advancing to the place where Alfonso sat, he bowed low down before the royal seat, and hoped God would protect his majesty.

"You have been long absent from us, Nunez," the king said, in his usual easy manner.

"Not long, sire. Only a few weeks."

"Hunting, I suppose."

"Yes, sire."

"I trust you have enjoyed yourself."

"Remarkably well, sire."

"What sort of game have you captured?"

Nunez glanced quickly into his brother's face, for there was just the slightest tinge of hidden meaning in the question, but he saw nothing to confirm his apprehension, so he replied:

"All kinds that roam in our forests, sire."

"You have been fortunate, Nunez."

"Thank you," returned the prince, slightly chafed, for he thought he detected a touch of irony in this last remark. "But," he added, assuming a matter-of-fact tone, "you have sent for me. Have you any commands?"

"Ah—you would come to business," said the king with a slight change in his tone, and a slight cloud upon his brow.

"Yes—for my time is just now valuable."

"Then I will proceed at once. Listen: Some three months since you brought a strong accusation against a knight of Castile. Perhaps you remember it."

"Against a knight of Castile!" repeated Nunez, with a quick start. "You are mistaken. I have charged no knight of Castile."

"Bethink thyself, Nunez."

"That were useless. Can you tell me his name?"

"Enrique de Moneva he was called," replied Alfonso, regarding the prince sharply.

Again Nunez started, and this time there was a fear-mark upon his face; but he quickly recovered himself, and, by the stern look of self-will which followed, he seemed to resolve that he would be moved no more.

"He was not a knight of Castile, sire, but of Cordova, and engaged with the Moors."

"Have you proof of this?"

"I had the best of proof at the time,"

"And have you destroyed it now?"

"All of documentary evidence, sire. But why this questioning? Who has dared to suspect wrong in this case?"

"I will tell you, Nunez. A man has appeared before me who declares that he can prove the innocence of the knight in question."

"Let me confront him, sire. By the host, I would see the man who dared to question or dispute my evidence!"

"You shall see him. Pedro—go call the man I would see. Call them both."

The page retired; and ere long the silken arras behind the royal seat was drawn aside, and Sir Enrique de Moneva, closely followed by Gomez, entered the audience-chamber. The youthful knight bowed to the king, and then, with a flashing eye, turned towards the prince.

"Death and perdition!" gasped Nunez, turning pale, and quivering like an aspen. "Art thou Enrique de Moneva?"

"I am," replied our hero.

"Then," cried the prince, half in fear and half in doubt, "there has been a foul plot to rob justice of her dues. Were you not dead?"

"Almost was I, but not quite. Your accursed plan for my destruction came well nigh succeeding." Enrique spoke calmly, and gazed his enemy steadily in the face the while.

"Beware how you speak to me, false knight!" exclaimed the prince. "By the powers above me, thou wert fresh from the council of the Moors when I arrested thee, as the papers upon thy person clearly proved!"

"Papers, Don Nunez!" uttered Enrique, in surprise. "Do you say you found papers upon me?"

"Aye—I did."

"Now, by San Jago!" cried the youth, "thou liest. I came hither from beyond Reynosa, where all my childhood and youth were spent, and never, to my knowledge, was I out of Castile. You met me on the road, and did see how I fought to save Castilian life. I am a knight of Castile; and my spurs once graced a king. I am innocent of thy foul charge, and thus do I challenge thee!"

As Enrique spoke he drew from his hand the single gauntlet which he had worn, and cast it upon the pavement at de Castaneda's feet. The clang of the heavy steel sounded through the apartment. and mingled with the ringing tones of the knight's voice.

Under an instinctive impulse such as a guilty man might feel, the prince started back from the gauntlet as though it had been a serpent. But he soon recovered himself, and then, turning to the king, he asked, in a husky tone—

"Do you recognize this man as a knight worthy of my steel?"

"I take him for a true knight, and shall so hold him until thou hast proved in the lists that Right is with thee," replied Alfonso, sternly.

Nunez hesitated a moment, and then he stooped and picked up the gauntlet, and, while a fiendish look dwelt upon his face, he cast it back with fury at Enrique's feet.

"Thus do I accept thy challenge?" he shouted. "And when thou hast conquered the Champion of Castile thy guilt may go unpunished. But let the battle be done at once, for I would not rest under this imputation."

"You shall not wait for me," said Enrique, as he lifted his gauntlet from the pavement. "The king may name the time."

"Let it be to-morrow," pronounced Alfonso. "Will that suit you, Don Nunez?"

"Yes, sire. The sooner the better."

"You, gentlemen," resumed the king, turning to where his captains stood in blank amazement, "have heard this challenge and its acceptance. You will be witnesses to the battle, as you have been to these preliminaries."

The four nobles bowed their assent, and Alfonso then turned to his brother.

"If your time is of great value, Nunez, we will not detain you longer. Our royal presence shall grace the lists to-morrow."

"And you shall see my charge sustained, sire," said the prince, with a show of virtuous indignation. "How these two suspected—aye, condemned, persons have escaped the fate they so richly merited I am at a loss to understand; and where they can have been harbored so long is equally a puzzle. But I trust all may be explained when I come from the field on the morrow."

"You shall be satisfied, Nunez."

"You have my gratitude, sire—my lasting gratitude." And with these words the prince turned and strode from the apartment.

"And now, gentle sir," the monarch said, addressing the youth, "you may retire and make such preparations as you think necessary. Look well to your armor, and see that your buckler-hold is firm."

"He whose cause is just has no occasion for fear," the youth returned. And then bowing before his king, he left the chamber by the same way in which he had come, Gomez following in his steps.

"No questions, gentlemen," Alfonso commanded, as the captains moved eagerly towards him. "Ask me nothing touching this affair. It is a strange story, and when I have seen the end you shall have all reasonable satisfaction."

"But, sire," ventured Rodrigo de Padillo, "the youthful knight cannot know whom he has challenged. Does he know that the stout prince has overcome the best lances of Castile?"

"He knows it all," the king answered, composedly; "and I think the prince will find his match. I have had a full account of this young knight's battle with the redoubtable Bonovento——"

"How!" cried de Castro and Arrelano, in surprise—"Is this the knight who slew the robber chieftain?"

"The very same," returned Alfonso. "And he did it in fair, hand-to-hand, single combat—first with the lance, and then with the ax."

"Then, i' faith, he has a chance," said de Padillo, hopefully, for the character and bearing of the prince were not relished by the knights of Burgos. "Bonovento was accounted one of the best lances in Castile——"

"*The* best," interrupted Don Alvarez.

"So he was," admitted Don Padillo; "and surely his wild, reckless life since his banishment could not have detracted any from his prowess."

"Have no fears, good sirs," interrupted Alfonso, stepping down from his seat. "I feel it in my very soul that the championship of our Castilian knighthood is about to change hands."

"And must the champion's scarf be worn by an unknown knight?" suggested de Castro, seeming not entirely reconciled to the idea.

"By San Jago!" cried the king, "methinks the CHAMPION OF CASTILE should not be unknown, let him be who he will!"

"Right! right!" echoed the others, and de Castro joined them in the decision.

"And now," resumed Alfonso, "we must to business of state, for to-morrow at this time we shall be engaged in a scene of more stirring moment."

Thus saying, the monarch turned from the room and led the way to the great audience chamber, where numerous officials were awaiting his coming.

* * * * *

When Don Nunez left the royal presence, he proceeded to the apartments which he was permitted to occupy in the palace, and having shut himself in, he commenced to pace the floor with quick, nervous steps. His hands were clasped behind him, and his teeth were tightly clenched, while his features were worked upon by deep and conflicting emotions. After a while his step grew slower, and finally he sank into a seat, and rested his brow upon his hand. There were low mutterings of the devil that was within him continually dropping from his lips, and the fierce, vengeful cast of his face told that dark thoughts were passing through his mind. At length, with a terrible oath, and a sudden clutching of his hands, he started up and hurried from the palace. His hat was pulled far down over his eyes, thus hiding their intense fire from the royal guards, but his hurried step, so different from his usual haughty bearing, arrested much attention.

When the prince gained the street at the foot of the steep hill upon which the palace stood, he turned to the right, keeping along by the great wall, and was soon in the neighborhood of the prison. But he passed the gloomy, frowning walls of Almanzor, and when he stopped it was before the door of a respectable-looking inn. He entered without ceremony, and proceeded at once to an upper chamber, when he rang a bell that stood upon the table, which summons was answered by a boy.

"Is your master in?" the visitor asked.

"Yes, my lord."

"Then send him here."

The boy withdrew, and in a few minutes the keeper of the inn entered. He saw who his caller was, and then carefully shut and locked the door behind him.

"You are awake, I see, my good Miguel," the prince remarked, as he saw this precautionary movement.

"I always am, my lord, and hence am I to be trusted. My motto is, be careful in everything, and then you'll be sure to save the big fishes with the little ones. Yes, yes—you can always depend upon finding me awake."

This Miguel was a small man, some forty years of age, and dressed with a scrupulous nicety. His features were sharp and angular, and his face dark and swarthy. His brow, which was high and narrow, projected over a pair of small, piercing black eyes, that gleamed and sparkled like sunlit ice when they rested upon any object of interest, and his thin, bloodless lips were, most of the time, tightly pressed over the fair, white teeth. His countenance was not unpleasing at first, for he could smile most generously, but when the cold-blooded look came—when the eye assumed its icy glare—when the long, wavy line of raven eyebrows settled far down over the peering orbs below them—and when the thin, long fingers were clutched as though some thing of gold or blood were held therein—then the close observer might shudder, and feel to see that his sword-hilt was free for self-defence. With his slight, lithe figure, he looked like a cat upon the watch, and his step was much like a cat's, too. He made no noise when he walked, but seemed to creep along with a gliding motion, almost as though his body were borne through space without any act of volition on his own part.

Many people wondered how Miguel contrived to live as he did, and how he paid for the house he kept, for his customers were few. Dark stories were told of a fierce robber who once infested the wild fastnesses and passes of the Sierra Guadarama, and who had, for some reason, left his band and come to Burgos, and set up as a publican. The unbelieving ones said that so small a man as Miguel Martello could not have been a great robber, but the others asserted that he was a man of steel, of ice and of fire—that he could move like the lightning or like the whirlwind. But there was more said than this even, though only in whispers. A very few had dared to say that the prince Nunez had brought Miguel from the Sierras, and hired him for his own purposes.

Once three men came from Talavera. They were merchants, and had been robbed a few years before in one of the passes of the Guadarama. They saw Miguel Martello, and they were foolish enough to tell him he looked very much like the brigand who had robbed them upon the Sierra. From that evening the three merchants were never seen at liberty again. One man said he saw them carried into the Moorish prison!

But the dark-visaged publican cared little what people thought or what they whispered. He had power enough to help himself in cases of emergency.

"Miguel," said the prince, casting off his sword and laying it upon the table, "bring me wine, and then prepare dinner. I shall remain here until night. And be you on hand, for I want you."

"To-night, you mean, my lord?"

"Yes. To-night."

CHAPTER XIV.

THE SECRET PASSAGE.

"How's the moon, Miguel?"

"Just down behind the wood, my lord."

"Then it must be ten o'clock."

"A little past ten, I should say."

"Just the season for our purpose," said Don Nunez, arising from his seat and buckling on his sword. "But tell me, Miguel—who is it that has been thumbing that noisy harp about the house?"

"O—that is a poor, half-witted fellow called Jinchillo the Brainless. He often stops here, and I rather like the rascal's humor."

"But he hangs upon my steps like a shadow," returned the prince, with a show of suspicion. "That accursed harp greets me first at Zerezo, then at Santa Maria de Rosal, then at the palace, and now here. The songs he sings are ringing in my ears continually. Hasn't he been in the adjoining chamber since I have been here?"

"What nonsense is this, my lord?" responded the host, lightly. "Jinchillo in the next room? Poor fellow! he don't know enough to find his way there, even allowing the doors were unlocked. But they are all fast."

"Yet I have heard a movement in that apartment, Miguel. I remember it now, though I thought nothing of it at the time."

"It was the tramp of rats, then," asserted the publican. "The marauding pests come over here from the prison, I expect."

"By the host, I'll see the fellow," cried Nunez. "Send him up here. He may be as innocent as a lamb, but I must say that his hanging thus upon my steps don't suit me. I'll see him."

Miguel left the chamber, and in a few moments returned, followed by the little old harper. The quaint cap was still upon his head, with its huge parti-colored tassel bobbing upon the peak of it, and the harlequin garb—somewhat soiled, and tattered, too—was the same he had worn for a long while.

"You want music, my masters," said Jinchillo, sinking into a chair, and placing his harp before him. "Shall I give you the——"

"Curse your music!" the prince uttered, impatiently.

"He curses music!" cried the harper, clasping his thin hands, and raising his eyes with holy horror. "What a reward for all my toils to be cursed by a publican."

"Whom do you call a publican, fellow?" demanded Nunez, assuming an anger which he did not feel.

"Mercy, good sir! Don't lay your hand on your sword in that way. Perhaps you are a knight. Ha—I know you are a knight. Listen:

"The sun shone bright
On the steel-clad knight,
As he rode to the wars away
But the tears of his bride
As he left her side,
Were as——'"

"Stop!" thundered Nunez. "We want none of that."

The minstrel ceased his song, and while yet the strings of his harp were vibrating with the harmonious sounds he had called forth, he cried out, with tears in his eyes—

"Alas! Woe is me! Why should you have called me hither but for my song? If ye be a knight, and are going to the wars, I'll cheer your heart, good sir. And if you have a lady-love, or a fair young bride, I can sing you a softer strain than ever the gods of other days had to please them."

The prince watched the harper narrowly. but he could detect nothing beyond the open simplicity he affected.

"Hold!" he commanded, as the old man raised his hands to sweep the strings anew. "No more of that; but listen to me. What is your name?"

"Jinchillo, sir knight of the Harsh Ear. Some men call me, The Brainless; but if I had a spur upon my heel they should eat their words. I' faith, they should, good sir."

"Now tell me," resumed Nunez, sternly, "why you hang upon my steps as you do?"

"Hang, sir knight?" returned Jinchillo, with simple wonder depicted upon his face. "Hang upon your steps? The Lord save me from such a fate. I do not deserve hanging."

There was such a look of blank surprise, gradually changing to an imploring expression, upon the old man's face, that the prince was forced to believe him honest and demented. Yet he resolved to question him further.

"Look ye, sirrah: You followed me to Zerezo; and then to Santa Maria; and then to the palace; and now you are here. Why do you follow me thus?"

"A miracle! A miracle!" cried the harper, his eyes sparkling, and a look of childish joy lighting up his weather-beaten features. "If I have followed thee thus, then thou must be a brave knight, and the Lord has ordered that thy deeds should become familiar in my song. But, i' faith," he added, gazing sharply into his interlocutor's face, and assuming an eager look. "I surely never saw thee before. Art thou a true knight?"

"I am an executioner. The headsman of Almanzor," replied Nunez, carelessly.

"Holy Mother save me!" ejaculated the old man, leaping from his chair and seizing his harp. "You ought to curse music! And thou—false-hearted publican," he continued, turning to Miguel, "how dared'st thou lead me into such company? Now by the sacred lyre of Phœbus, may you never either of you hear music again! But I won't curse you."

With these words Jinchillo threw his harp over his shoulder, and turned towards the door. The prince made a motion as though he would have stopped him, but his mind quickly changed, and the old man was allowed to depart; and ere long the sound of his harp and song was heard far up the street.

"'Twere foolish to suspect harm of him," the host said, after the quaint fellow had gone.

"It may be," responded Nunez; "but still his often presence was rather suspicious. I am not in a mood to be dogged, Miguel; nor are my present plans likely to be helped on by being too widely known. We cannot be too careful. But let him go. I am satisfied he has had no ulterior motives."

"Most assuredly not," responded the host. "He is here, there, and everywhere—to-day in Burgos; to-morrow in Zerezo; next day in the Waras; and then off to Soria; and while the twang of his harp is still reverberating upon the southern borders you shall find him at my door ready to sing of good old king Sancho for a horn of wine."

"So much for Jinchillo; and now for our mission," said the prince, starting up from his chair, and placing his hat upon his head. "You have seen Francisco and Bernardo?"

"Yes. They will be ready at any moment, my lord."

"Then come. Is your lantern ready?"

"Yes."

"And lighted?"

"In a moment," returned Miguel; and as he spoke he took from his bosom a small lantern which he opened, and having taken out the lamp and lighted it, he put it back, reclosed the masked lid, and then replaced it securely within the folds of his frock.

"Now follow, and keep me in sight till I stop," ordered Nunez, as he left the room.

The moon had been down nearly half an hour when the prince reached the street, and though the stars were out, yet a vail of mist hung over the city, rendering it dark and gloomy. Along by the prison Nunez led the way, thence striking into a narrow passage that opened upon the city wall by the river. At this point he turned to the right, keeping well in the shadow of the wall, and thus he kept on until he reached the eastern slope of the palace hill, where he stopped until Miguel came up.

The spot where the two men stood was near the angle made by the city wall and the precipitous face of the hill. Above them loomed up the castellated walls of the palace, like a huge mountain of perforated rock; and Nunez, as he gazed up at it, clenched his teeth with a grating sound, and shook his fist in the air. But he stopped not long to regard the dark walls that encased his royal brother. He turned to a small copse of orange trees that grew close by, and having gained the center of the grove he came to a little chapel, built of stone, within which was a shrine to the Virgin and an altar. The door was easily opened, for it was never locked, and when Nunez and his companion had entered, the latter drew forth his lantern.

This chapel had been built by the founder of the castle-palace above it, and people believed that pure piety had dedicated its erection. In size it was some five yards square, with a dome upon the roof which was separated by four pillars. Between these pillars was the shrine, while the altar, upon which was a rude crucifix of stone, was situated against the rear wall. Upon the outside only three of the walls were visible, for the structure was placed against the almost perpendicular side of the hill, and, at a short distance, seemed half buried beneath it. At the shrine many a wayfarer stopped to crave a bllessing from the Virgin Mother of Jesus, while some knelt before the altar and uttered their prayers to the Son of God himself. But the little chapel was seldom visited after nightfall, for not only was its locality lonesome and dreary, but strange stories had been told about it—stories of ghosts and evil spirits—which had been handed down from past times, and firmly believed by the honest people of Burgos.

"What do ye here, my lord?" asked Miguel, as he gazed around upon the dark gray walls and pillars and altar.

"First I must administer to you an oath," the prince returned.

"An oath, Don Nunez? And for what?"

"That you will never reveal to a living soul—saving only Francisco and Bernardo—the secret I am about to open to thee."

"Pshaw! Why talk of oaths to me, my good prince?" returned the publican, with a tinge of contempt in his tone. "I give thee my word that any secret which you may give me shall be sacredly kept. 'Twould be but mockery for me to take an oath."

"And I suppose you think 'twould be an equal mockery for me to administer one," added Nunez, trying to smile, but with poor success.

"I did not say so, my lord, though I must say that you have few of the qualities of a pious priest."

"You speak bluntly."

"And truly, my lord."

"I'll not deny it. But let the oath go. We have no time to lose. Alfonso holds a court to-night, and my man will in all probability attend to gain a sight at the ceremony; and if he does he wont get away before midnight."

Thus speaking the prince went to the door, and having assured himself that it was closed he approached the shrine, and bade his companion hold the lantern for him. Then, at the foot of one of the pillars, and amid a mass of vines sculptured in relief upon the base, he found a secret, movable piece, which he pressed first downwards, and then into the seemingly solid rock. A dull sound, like the stroke of a hammer, followed this movement, and then stepping between this pillar and its mate, Nunez pressed his foot upon the edge of one of the broad stone flags, which immediately settled from its place and slid out of sight, thus revealing an aperture a yard square, that opened to a dark abyss, and up from which came a current of cold, damp air.

Miguel had gazed with wonder upon this operation, and when the secret passage was thus opened he gazed down into the space below. He could see a few stone steps, but they were lost in the gloom at a short distance, and beyond all was utter blackness.

"Are you going down here?" he asked.

"Yes," replied the prince; "and I want you to study well the way, for you may have to traverse it without my guidance the next time you come."

"Very well. Lead on, and I will follow."

"Give me the lantern.—There.—Now come."

Nunez went down first, and, when his companion had descended, he stepped back and slid the broad flag into its former place; and as it assumed its position it was caught by four steel springs, one upon each side, which held it firmly. It was the releasing of these springs that had been accomplished by the movement of the secret knob upon the base of the pillar.

Thus secured against detection, Nunez descended the steps, fifteen in number, which landed him in a vaulted chamber, nearly as large as the room above. The walls were of solid masonry, and the arch or dome of the vault turned after the most approved style of firm, enduring architecture.

"What now?" asked Miguel, after he had peered about in vain for some means of egress other than the stone steps.

"You shall see," was the answer of the prince, as he moved towards the wall which was next the palace hill. "This is a curious place, Miguel; and let me assure thee that thou art the first man I have ever taken in here. Only the king and myself, and three of our captains—Rinaldo de Pedrosa, of the Royal Guard; de Padillo, and Sir Garcia de Castro—know the secret of this place. But even they do not dream of what I know concerning it. They know that from the great vault beneath the palace to the little hill-side chapel there is this communication; but I have been experimenting and searching; and I have found secret branches leading to nearly every part of the huge structure above us; aye, even to the very sleeping chamber of the king!"

While Nunez had been speaking he had found a secret spring, and one of the huge rocks of the wall had revolved half-way around upon a pivot which ran vertically through its center. Through the aperture thus opened the two men passed, and when the prince had closed up the way behind him he took the lantern and hastened on.

They were now in a passage not far from two yards wide, the walls composed of hewn stone, and the top arched. In some places the rock seemed to be native to its place, and solid as the hill itself; and after traversing some distance it became evident that a cavern of some kind had existed here before human hands ever shaped the vaulted way. The course was winding and erratic, and ever and anon an inclined plane turned the direction of the adventurers upward.

And so they went—now to the right—now up—and now to the left; through narrow passes, and through wider ones. Secret doors were opened—flights of steps were ascended—up, up, up—until at length they came to a warmer atmosphere, and found the echo of their footsteps more sharp and distinct.

"We are in the palace now," whispered Nunez; "and we must remove our shoes."

As soon as this precaution had been taken, the prince led the way up a narrow flight of steps—so narrow that only one person could pass at the same time—and which seemed to be built between the walls of a corridor and adjacent apartments. Ever and anon the rays of the lantern would fall upon a panel secured in its place by an iron hasp, and which could be moved upon one side in grooved ways. From the secret passage all these mystic traps were plainly to be seen; but upon the other side, in the habitable apartments, the walls and wainscoting seemed wholly innocent of any such contrivances.

Finally, Don Nunez stopped, and bade his companion to do the same. It was before one of these sliding panels, and seemed to be well up in the palace, if one might judge from the innumerable steps which had been ascended. A tiny plug of wood was pulled from the wall, and to the orifice thus opened the prince applied his eye.

"It is as I thought," he said. "The room is dark and empty.—Carefully, now, Miguel."

Thus speaking, Nunez unhooked the panel and slid it gently away into the wall. Then he stepped through into one of the sleeping chambers of the palace, followed closely by the publican. He listened attentively a few moments, but no sound, save the indistinct hum of the life in distant halls, fell upon his ear, and thus assured he turned to his companion.

"Miguel, have you marked well the way hither?"

"Yes, my lord."

"So that you could find it alone?"

"Yes."

"Then listen:—Here sleeps Sir Enrique de Moneva. To-morrow I meet him in the lists. I hope to kill him, but I may not."

"And are you sure that he may not kill you?" queried the publican.

"So sure that I shall let him live to meet me," returned Nunez. "If I cannot slay him I am perfectly sure of protecting my own life. But, as I said, he may not fall upon the field. If he does not—*he must die here!* Do you understand me, Miguel?"

"Perfectly—as far as you have gone," replied the other, without the least change of countenance.

"It is very simple," resumed Nunez, sinking his voice to a whisper. "If he comes alive to this room to-morrow night he must die here! You can bring Francisco and Bernardo with you. Let it be at two hours after midnight. With your delicate poignard you can strike a death-blow to the heart that will not bleed much——"

"I can strike a blow to his very heart's core that shall not let ten drops of blood ooze forth. See!" And as he spoke, Miguel drew from his bosom a slim, needle-like dirk, the blade of which was three-edged and ground like a rapier. It glistened in the like light a strip of polished mirror, seeming a very simple and innocent affair. But its owner knew its peculiar properties right well.

"I supposed you could do it," continued the prince, with a fierce sparkle of the eye. "They will be abed by the time I have named—the esquire in that little room, and his master here. Kill them—staunch what blood may flow—and drag them down into the vaults below, where we can dispose of them at our leisure. No one will know what has become of them, and the idea will be, that they have left the city."

A few more words were sufficient to arrange the whole matter, and then the twain left as they had entered.

And when Enrique de Moneva came into his room he found no traces of the monsters who had been there.

CHAPTER XV.

THE TRIAL AT ARMS.

The news spread rapidly through the city that the prince Nunez had been challenged by a young knight whom he had accused, and at an early hour crowds began to gather about the great square at the foot of palace hill. The lists were already formed, the whole arrangement being a permanent affair for the express purpose of the various battles and tournaments which the adventurous knights were continually projecting. The space enclosed by the railing contained about two acres, and was in the form of an oblong parallelogram, the raised seats for the king and the privileged ones being at the center of the longest side next the hill.

"He must be a presumptuous youth to challenge the champion of Castile," said an old armorer, who had done much work for valiant knights.

"Perhaps he knows not the prowess of the prince," suggested a companion of the same calling.

"But some one must have told him," returned the first speaker. "Can there be a knight in Castile who does not know our champion?"

"But," pursued the other, "he has been accused of some great crime, for which he might suffer death. So you see he chooses to die thus."

"Aha—yes—I see. Mayhap you are right," the old armorer said. "But see—here comes the royal retinue. By San Jago, but our king is a noble-looking knight!"

As the old man spoke a flourish of trumpets broke upon the air, and while the heralds still continued to pipe their ringing blasts, Alfonso, followed by a long line of noble knights and gentle dames, ascended to the canopied stage and took his seat. There were the dons, Rodrigo de Padillo, Arrelano, de Castro, Alvarez de Hara, the noble Count John de Velasco, and many others of less degree. Upon the monarch's right sat Eleanor de Velasco. She was very pale, and the lines upon her face indicated much suffering. The queen, Theresa of Castile, was not present. She was indisposed, and felt not like suffering the excitement of such a contest. So the fair daughter of the old count graced the queenly seat.

"You look pale, my sweet cousin," said Alfonso, taking the maiden's hand and gazing into her face.

"Alas, sire, I feel unhappy," the maiden murmured, as she pressed her free hand upon her bosom.

"And why unhappy?"

"You should know that already, sire."

"Aye, cousin, I do know. You love the youthful knight, and fear he will be overcome in this contest."

Eleanor made no reply; but the tremor that shook her frame told as plainly as words could have done that the king had spoken truly.

"Trust in God, fair cousin, and keep up a good heart. Did I not know that Sir Enrique was a doughty knight this meeting should never have come off; for I believe him entirely innocent of the charge laid to him, and would have had that innocence proved in another way. But wait. God will not fail to protect the right."

The maiden cast a grateful glance up into Alfonso's face, and for the moment she seemed to take hope; but soon her gaze wandered off to where her stern father stood, and the hopeful look faded away with a painful sigh. The king had watched her with a keen eye, and suddenly a new light broke upon his countenance.

"Eleanor," he whispered, taking her hand again, "I have gained more of your secret. You fear your father."

"My father, sire?" repeated the maiden, in wondering surprise.

"He is an enemy to your love," added Alfonso, in the same low tone.

Eleanor gazed up again, this time with an imploring, prayerful expression.

"Am I not right, cousin?"

"Yes, sire."

"I thought so. But take heart. Though your father may reject the unknown knight, he may not reject the Champion of Castile."

A quick flush of hope suffused the maiden's face, for there was more than a mere surmise in the monarch's voice; but ere she could reply the heralds sounded another blast, and in a few seconds more Don Nunez de Castaneda, Champion of Castile, rode into the lists. He was followed by two esquires and his physician.

Ere long another flourish sounded, and as the harsh notes died away Sir Enrique followed the prince, accompanied only by Gomez, who bore his lance and buckler.

"By the Twelve Apostles!" cried the old armorer, "if that is Sir Enrique, then he is the noblest looking knight of all Castile! San Jago! See how he sits! Look at that cuirass! I' faith, an' if his breast fills out that swelling steel, then he must have mighty sinews centering there!"

The vast square was now filled by eager people, and away up the face of the palace-hill the sea of human heads extended. A murmur of admiration arose upon all hands as the strange knight made his appearance—an admiration so palpable, too, that Nunez could not mistake it. He clenched his fists, and, with a fierce oath, nerved himself for the contest.

Again the trumpets sounded, and the herald demanded silence while the combatants stated their cause. The prince was the first to approach the royal seat.

"Sire," he said, as he drew up before the king, "before God and man I charge Enrique de Moneva with being an imposter and a traitor! and I now am ready to make my charge good as becometh a true knight."

Another flourish from the trumpeters, and then the heralds repeated the words Don Nunez had spoken—one at each corner of the list proclaiming the charge.

Next came Sir Enrique. He caught Eleanor's eye as he rode up, and as he saw the look of intense, prayerful love which rested there, his soul grew stronger than before.

"Sire," he said, uncovering his head and bowing low, "you have heard the charge which Sir Nunez de Castaneda hath brought against me. Before my God and my sovereign, and before the people whom such a crime would outrage, I swear that the charge is false! And I am here to ask God to be with me in the contest—to let me be overcome if I am guilty, and to bear me up if I am innocent!"

As before, the heralds proclaimed the words which had been spoken; then the king arose, and in a loud voice cried out—

"Now let the trial proceed! And may God protect the right!"

The trumpets now sounded loud and long, and the accuser and the accused took their places, the former at the eastern end of the lists, and the latter in the west.

There was a marked contrast between the two knights. Don Nunez was not so tall by half a head as his antagonist, but his massive shoulders and stout limbs gave him a doughty look. There was a slight stoop in his frame as he sat in his saddle, caused by an over-roundness of the upper part of the back. Yet he was a formidable appearing knight, and of his prowess there was ample proof in the deeds of the past.

Enrique de Moneva sat the very picture of knightly beauty in his saddle. His form, full as muscular and powerful as that of his opponent's, was erect and symmetrical, and not a point could be found in his whole contour which the most fastidious lover of chivalry could have changed for the better.

The knights closed and secured their visors, and then took their lances and shields.

"God be with you, my master!" fervently ejaculated Gomez, as he gave up the lance and buckler.

"He is with me!" was the knight's response, as he slipped his left arm into the leathern beckets, and poised his long spear.

A dead silence now reigned over the vast crowd, and in all that great multitude there was not a more palpable sound than the quick breathing of the fair maid who sat beside the king. Shortly the herald announced that all was ready, and the trumpets sounded the charge.

Like two arrows did the knights start from their places, approaching each other with a speed that seemed to promise instant destruction to both when they met. Every breath was hushed—and all hearts were stilled for the while. On they came, the unadorned armor of Sir Enrique flashing like a hundred tiny mirrors in the sunlight, while that of Don Nunez gleamed only from its rich settings of gold and precious stones. Both lances were couched with equal grace, but the prince's was carried the highest.

A moment more—and the very earth seemed to quake beneath the shock. A loud clang told that both shields had been struck, and it was quickly seen that neither of the knights had been unhorsed; but as they rode on the lance of Don Nunez was seen to have been thrown almost over his shoulder by the concussion, while that of his adversary still remained couched as before. Both had been shaken in their saddles, for the shock was terrific; but they yet held their seats firmly as they separated.

When the prince reached the end of the lists, and had turned, he swung his lance aloft, shouting as he did so—

"*Death to the traitor!*"

"GOD AND THE RIGHT!" exclaimed Enrique, in reply, lifting his face heavenward.

The king waved his truncheon, and the trumpets sounded the charge again.

"Now, good Lion," spoke our hero to his horse, "on to victory!"

The noble beast understood those words very well. His graceful neck was proudly arched, his nostrils dilated, and with his neatly turned hoofs he impatiently pawed the earth. The sound of the trumpets fell upon his ear—he felt the gentle touch of the rowel upon his flank—and like a spirit of the fierce wind he dashed away from the paling. Don Nunez sat not so straight as before; he crouched forward, like a leopard before its prey, thus hoping to give more force to his lance, and at the same time withstand the shock more safely. And Sir Enrique leaned further forward, too, but he did not bend his shoulders nor bow his head.

On they came, more swiftly than before, for the mettle of the horses was up. Enrique carried his lance with an iron hand and steady nerve, and his eye was fixed upon the point, where he hoped he might strike, between the jeweled gorget and visor of his opponent.

There was a shock, as of an avalanche, and a whilwind of dust for the instant enveloped both the knights; but in a moment more Sir Enrique de Moneva rode forth unscathed, his lance slightly raised, his coal-black charger proudly stepping from the conflict, and himself firmly seated in his saddle. But a worse fate was the other's. When the cloud of dust was blown away, Don Nunez was seen at full length upon the sand, his helmet torn off and flung at some distance from him, and his powerful horse lying dead by his side, with his neck broken!

"GOD'S WILL BE DONE!" cried the king, raising his truncheon aloft.

"*God's will be done!*" repeated the heralds.

"*God's will be done!*" arose from the assembled multitudes, in tones of gladness and joy. The haughty prince was not liked by the people, for they knew his cruel disposition, and they were glad to see him overthrown.

Enrique waited some minutes to see if Nunez would renew the contest; but when he saw the fallen noble borne out from the list by his esquires, he rode up to the royal dais and leaped from his saddle, and having sank upon his knee, he said, in a prayerful tone—

"Sire, henceforth believe me innocent, and accept my oath of allegiance. My lance and my blood are my king's and my country's."

Alfonso quickly started to his feet, and hurried down to where the knight still knelt.

"Arise, Sir Enrique," he said, at the same time taking the youth by the arm. "Arise and assume the first station thou hast gained in Castile.——What ho, there!" the king cried, turning to the herald who stood near, "see if the prince will renew the contest."

But the herald had not to leave his post, for at that moment a messenger came from the prince's physician, with word that Don Nunez was still insensible, and could not possibly sit in his saddle again for the day.

"Then," said the king, in a loud tone, turning to his nobles, with his hand still upon Enrique's arm, "knights of Castile, behold your CHAMPION!"

When the loud shouts which followed this announcement had subsided, the youthful hero moved a step forward, and spoke to the assembled warriors:

"Knights of Castile, I would not wear honors which you should judge too lightly won. In a friendly joust I am ready to meet any and all who may appear against me. And now judge me as ye find me."

"And we'll judge thee well," the king added, with a happy smile. "But the work is not yet done." And turning to one of the heralds, he bade him go and bring the Champion's scarf which Don Nunez had worn.

The man departed, and soon returned with the significant badge. It was of heavy purple silk, fringed with gold, and bore the legend "*Semper paratus*," (always ready.)

"The lady Eleanor bestowed this gift before, and she shall do it now," Alfonso said, as he ascended the platform and handed the scarf to the maiden. "Come up, Sir Enrique, and receive thy badge of honor."

The youthful knight ascended the tapestried steps, and knelt before Eleanor de Velasco. She arose and placed the scarf over his shoulder. She tried to speak, but she could not. She trembled violently, and would surely have sank down, had not the king noticed her strange manner, and quickly supported her to her seat.

"And now," cried Alfonso, as the youthful knight arose to his feet, who will meet the Champion of Castile?"

But there was no answer. And if there had been it could not have been heard, for as the new champion arose, the thunders of the multitude burst forth again, nor did they cease until the royal retinue had left the stand.

"We've got the work to do ourselves, after all!" muttered Miguel Martello, as he turned from the square.

He spoke to a stout, swart-featured man, named Francisco.

[TO BE CONTINUED IN OUR NEXT.]

POPULAR NOVELISTS AND RELIGION.—"We wish," says the Presbyterian Quarterly Review, "that Mr. Dickens could be persuaded for once, if only for the sake of variety and truth to nature, to become acquainted with one decent minister of any denomination, and give us his portrait as an offset to the disgusting hypocrites he delights to paint. *Is* there no such thing as an honest man in England preaching the gospel?"

GRATITUDE.—If you have a *present* friend, and wish to make a future enemy of him, lend him money. If he *should* return it when you happen to be a little pressed, borrow a mite of him, and in *two* days, if not paid, you will *find how dearly he loves you.*

CATCHING A TARTAR.

During the last war with Great Britain, usually designated as the war of 1812, the waters of the Atlantic were prolific in saucy and fast-sailing privateers, which were a great annoyance to the enemy, and which finally proved, in no small degree, influential in bringing about a treaty of peace.

These bold adventurers were fitted out from almost all the American ports, from Passamaquoddy Bay to New Orleans. New England, however, furnished by far the largest number of these vessels, and some of her seaport towns are still flourishing in the wealth obtained by this now somewhat questionable mode of warfare. But in those days all means which annoyed an enemy were considered fair in war.

The town of Bristol, R. I., took a very active part in this war, as it had also done in the war of the Revolution, and not only furnished a good number of athletic and chivalrous young men to the navy of our country, but most of the men of means embarked their capital in the then fashionable investment of fitting out privateers, and placing their sons on board of them to make their investments good.

The privateers *Yankee* and *Macdonough* belonged to this port, and many were the rich prizes those gallant little cruisers carried in triumph into that harbor. One prize alone, an Indiaman, which the Yankee sent into Bristol, sold, with her cargo, for $250,000.

The schooner Yankee was the first privateer which, in that war, sailed from the waters of Narragansett Bay. She was commanded by Captain Joseph Oliver Wilson, who proved himself a brave and successful sailor. Under his command, the Yankee sent into Bristol, and other American ports, no less than *seventy-two prizes*, among which were not only valuable East Indiamen and other merchantmen, but a number of heavily armed vessels belonging to the British navy. She was finally so battered up in her frequent engagements, that she was no longer sea-worthy, and returned to port and condemned. One of her prizes, the Macdonough, was then refitted and put into commission. Her command was also given to Captain Wilson, with the same officers and crew. She was a topsail schooner, and was almost as successful in winning wealth for her owners as her predecessor. The Macdonough sent into port *fifty-four* prizes.

The news of the ratification of peace between the two countries reached Captain W. while he was lying in the harbor of Havana, awaiting the arrival of an English armed vessel, daily looked for on the Cuban coast.

On leaving that port, the Macdonough, although not considered so good a sailor as the Yankee, made the run to Bristol inside of six days. This was then the quickest passage on record.

After the war, Captain Wilson retired with his laurels and prize money to the sugar estate, San Juan, near Matanzas, in the Island of Cuba, where he was fond of entertaining his visitors with the recital of incidents and anecdotes of his privateer life. I have listened with great interest to the exciting adventures of the gallant old sailor. Many of them, like a thousand similar incidents of those times, should have been recorded as matter for history; but which through negligence, will be lost to posterity.

There were performed by our brave Yankee sailor boys, feats of heroic daring and chivalry which would have immortalized their names if performed under the folds of our naval bunting. Many brave-hearted and worthy fellows who afterwards subsided into quiet and unpretending skippers, had they had what they richly merited, would have held and done honor to the highest commissions in our gallant navy. Many a young Decatur and Macdonough, many a Perry and Lawrence might have been encountered on the decks of our New England privateers. In fact this was the school which supplied our rising navy with its best officers, and more than one of our brave old commodores looks back with pride to the deck of some little Yankee privateer as his *Alma Mater.*

The following incident, which was related to me by Captain W., I will endeavor to repeat in his own words. Years have passed by since it was told to me, and the brave old sailor has been long gathered to his fathers, and although it is impossible to do justice to his manner of telling the story, I well remember much of his phraseology.

"We sailed," said he, "from Bristol on the first day of October, and stood away for the south'ard and east'ard, with a fresh westerly wind. Our intention was to cruise in the Southern Atlantic, in the track of the homeward bound British Indiamen. We were in quest of noble game, and this part of the Atlantic was our best field of adventure. It was true we were very liable to fall in with convoying English men-of-war in those latitudes. But we had all confidence in the sailing qualities of the Yankee, and knew what we could not whip, we could run away from; for running into the eye of the wind, the little privateer could outsail everything she had ever yet encountered on the high seas. In this respect we had a great advantage over the enemy. The vessels of the English naval service, as well as her commercial marine, were in those days notorious as dull sailers, particularly on the wind. In that point of excellence the Americans have always maintained the superiority.

"The Yankee was as good as new. We had returned from a long cruise on the west coast of Africa, and had had her up in dry dock. She had been newly coppered, and her spars had all been scraped down. A new suit of canvas had been bent, and all the standing and running rigging had been overhauled and made taught. She had been painted over anew, and in lieu of the broad white stripe, which before had ornamented her sides, she was now surrounded by a narrow belt of vermillion, which contrasted strongly with the bright black, her prevailing color. The inside of her ports was also painted of a bright vermillion,—and when these were thrown open, and she showed her teeth, the Yankee looked as proud and saucy as a young tigress, with her first litter of whelps.

"She had already established a notoriety upon the seas; and every British man-of-war cruising between the two continents, had standing orders to keep upon the look out for us, and sink us. On this voyage, therefore, we had changed her appearance somewhat, and when occasion required, we could make her appear as modest and harmless, as an unpretending coaster. Yet all was so snug alow and aloft; and her run, from stem to stern, was in such perfect good taste, and there was such a proportionate yet almost imperceptible rise in her quarter deck, and forecastle, which added to the elegant and symmetrical form of her hull,—the delicate and clean tapering of her polished spars,—her bright and taught rigging,—her beautifully fitting canvass, and the neatness of her general trim, that she excited the pride and admiration of every genuine sailor, who looked upon her.

"Her armament consisted of twelve guns;—eight nine, and four six pounders; besides a long brass swivel nine-pounder amid ships. We had an extra quantity of boarding pikes, muskets, pistols, sabres, &c., in the use of which the men were daily exercised. Our crew was mostly made up of the picked young men of Bristol; and a braver, or more noble hearted set of boys never trod the deck of a vessel. If there ever was a commander who had cause to be proud of his ship and crew, it was I. I had not a man, who in an emergency, was not qualified to take the command of any vessel, so that I never was at fault in selecting a prize crew. In any cutting out, or expedition on shore, on English ground, where a few fearless and prudent men were required, I could never call for volunteers, as every man and boy on board, would instantly present himself, and beg to be sent on the service. Mine was indeed a crew to be proud of; and I loved my boys.

"By the 20th we had passed through the sailor's purgatory, the Doldrums—a region of perpetual calm, where the tropical rains pour a ceaseless torrent from out the leaden clouds; and the next morning found us running up into the-south east trades.

"Towards evening a heavy bank of clouds, surcharged with rain, and with strongly defined outlines, rose in sullen grandeur from the horizon to the windward, and threw a shadow of inky blackness upon the sea in that direction. The white caps of the breaking waves under the increasing cloud gleamed like snow-drifts by contrast, and this appearance was hightened by the phosphorescent light which illuminated the crests of the seas.

"The breeze which had been blowing fresh from the south-east, now began to flag and chop around to the eastward, varying from that point to the south-east again and to the south'ard. There was every indication of a gale. So directing sails to be shortened, and everything made snug alow and aloft, I retired to my cabin.

"About midnight I returned to the deck, and found the night extremely dark. The clouds, which had made their appearance to windward, had spread over the heavens, and broken up into broad, black heaps of vapor. They were completely arched over the sea, marking the near horizon closing around us with a distinct line of illuminated spray. It was one of those singular appearances which I do not remember to have observed anywhere but within the tropics.

"The wind had nearly died into a calm. Occasionally the moon, with a desperate struggle, would send down a few straggling rays through some ragged rent in the gloomy mists overhead; then a long, solitary, pale beam would flash out, and light up, with a sudden gleam, a narrow strip of sea in the distance, showing us the tumbling waves, glistening like molten silver. Then the moonlight would fade gradually away, and appear, quite unlooked for, through some other cloud rent, in another place. The dull glimmering of the straggling beams, and the subdued phosphorescent illumination of the sea, with the monotonous breaking of the waves upon our cutwater and quarters, and the easy rolling of the vessel, had a soothing influence upon the senses of the watch on deck; and they found it necessary to keep in motion to shake off their drowsiness.

"I had been on deck but a few minutes, barely long enough to note what I have described, when the man stationed in the foretop—for we were now on our cruising ground, and a look-out was continually kept aloft—cried out—'*Sail ho!*'

"'Where away?' inquired Mr. Richmond, who was officer of the watch, that night.

"'Right off the lee bow, sir,' replied the sailor.

"'What do you make her out?'

"'Can't tell, sir, yet;—she is partly hid in a bank of mist. Now, sir, it clears a little. It's a *ship*, sir!'

"'What does she look like?' I now inquired.

"'She looks like a Canton trader, sir;—I'm sure she's English built.'

"'What's her course?'

"'She's heading sou'-sou'-west, sir.'

"By this time all was commotion on board the Yankee, and as I sprang into the main rigging with my night-glass in hand, a moonbeam glanced out from a silvery break in the clouds to leeward, and lighting up a golden pathway over the heaving waves, fell directly upon the white sails of the stranger, not a mile distant. She was an English Indiaman, without doubt. Our quarterdeck was now swarming with officers, who, some with night-glasses and others with the unaided eye, were intently engaged in scanning her.

"'What the d—l is she doing on that tack!' exclaimed Mr. Richmond. 'It strikes me as somewhat odd that a homeward-bound Indiaman should be running down in that direction.' But while the officer was yet speaking, the matter was explained; the stranger shook out all her canvass; and running up her light sails, dropped two points more off the wind. She had evidently discovered us before we had seen her, and now evinced a willingness to give us a wide berth.

"'Mr. Richmond,' said I, 'we must overhaul that fellow, and find out what he is made of.'

"'Yes, sir!' replied he, and hailing the watch, gave orders to crowd all sail.

"In a few moments we were bowling along on the same tack with the stranger. She sailed well before the wind; and for several hours we could not perceive that we had gained an inch on her. In the meantime, the clouds were lighting up a little; and the moon, pouring her light more steadily upon the sea, enabled us to keep sight of the chase from the deck, and without the aid of glasses.

"When the day began to break, we observed that for some unaccountable reason the stranger changed her tack, and lay close in the wind, which now blew a steady eight-knot breeze from the south-east. This was our best tack, and soon it was evident we were rapidly gaining upon her. She was a small ship, and lay deep in the water as if heavily freighted. Her sides were rusty, as if long at sea, and in many other respects she had the usual appearance of homeward-bound vessels from India.

"But there was something in the perfection of her rig, and in the quiet and easy manner she was handled, that excited suspicion. Besides, her conduct in changing her tack, on a course where she was sure of being overhauled by us, was inexplicable.

"'What do you think of her, Mr. Richmond?' said I to my first officer, who had been some time closely occupied in watching the stranger.

"'She is evidently less anxious to get out of our way than she was last night, sir,' was his reply. 'It's my opinion she is either a neutral or a rogue.'

"'I begin to have my own doubts,' said I. 'At all events, we'll make her show her colors. Give her a shot from one of the starboard-bow guns, and have all hands piped to quarters.'

"The order was executed promptly, and as the crew came pouring up through the hatches, in obedience to the shrill whistle of the boatswain, the iron throat of the nine-pounder disturbed the silence of the sea with its roar; and as the breeze lifted the white smoke, a small rent in the foretop-sail of the ship showed that the shot had told.

"Still the stranger kept on her course, in dogged sullenness; neither condescending to show his flag, or even to return our shot.

"'Give her another shot, there. We'll bring her to reason yet. Clear the decks for action. I perceive, Mr. Richmond, there is fight in that fellow, if we can coax it out of him.'

"In the meantime, we continued rapidly to gain upon the ship, coming up under her windward quarter. We were within musket range when I directed the officer to hail her.

"'Ho! Ship ahoy!'

"'Hillo!' came back, in a sullen growl.

"'What ship is that?'

"No answer was given directly to this last hail, but an officer seemed to be engaged in bending a flag to the gaff halyards; and when the hail was repeated, in no very gentle tones, a dark ball of bunting rose slowly aloft, and with a skillful jerk of the halyards, fell from its confinement, and the the British Jack floated out gracefully upon the breeze. At the same instant our hail was answered—

"'*His Majesty's Sloop-of-War Tigress!*'

"And simultaneous with this reply she opened a long tier of larboard ports, and exposed to our astonished view twelve guns of heavy calibre, bearing directly upon our decks.

"'Sink the d—d Yankees!—Fire!" was roared from the quarter deck of the ship!—and the next instant her heavy broadside, came crashing, and tearing through our bulwarks, strewing our deck with ruin and death, and making sad havoc with our spars and rigging. The smoke of the enemy, however, had hardly floated away from the mouths of the guns, when we returned our entire broadside of six guns, and swept her decks almost as effectually as she had ours.

"*We had caught a Tartar!* and our legs were of no use now. Besides, we were badly crippled. Our foremast was shattered to splinters, and would soon go by the board. We were in for fight; and I determined to give the Englishman all he wanted, or sink in the attempt. He would blow us out of water in another broadside like that.

"'Call away the boarders!' shouted I. 'Men, fill your belts from the arm chests, and prepare to follow me. Mr. Richmond, send some men into the forecastle with muskets, and lay us foul of that fellow, without a moments delay.'

"'Aye, aye Sir'—and in less time than it takes to tell it, the jibboom of the Yankee, fouled through the fore rigging of the ship; and the two vessels fell side by side in a deathlike embrace. In an instant we poured like an avalanche upon her swarming deck. Our heavy guns were now useless; and muskets, pistols, sabres, and boarding pikes, were the weapons that now came into play. My boys fought like devils; and although the crew of the man-of-war numbered more than two to our one, we knew it was to be victory, or death. The enemy, we were aware, would give us no quarters. I endeavored to be the first on the ship's deck; but I had no sooner leaped from the bulwarks, than I found myself surrounded by scores of my gallant fellows. In the mean time, our men, in the rigging of the schooner, poured down a hail storm of musket shot upon the heads of the English. It was a desperate fight; and the enemy fought with a cool and determined courage; but they had not counted on so desperate an assault.

"The Tigress, had been cruising for us, thus disguised, for some months; and after scouring up and down the African coast, without encountering us, had finally sought for us, in these latitudes. She had skillfully covered her true character. Had we suspected, who she really was, we would not have courted an engagement with her; but would have shown her a fine specimen of superior sailing on the wind;—we would have considered 'discretion the better part of valor.' She carried more than double our amount of metal,—having twenty-four nine and twelve pounders, and as I said before, more than double the complement of men. But now we stood upon her decks, struggling knife to knife, and breast to breast. Pistol and musket shots whistled through our crowded ranks, like hail; and covered the decks of both vessels with blood. The dead and dying, lay in heaps about us. But still we fought on. As the breeze lifted the sulphury vapor, breathed by our fire-arms, the morning beams glanced on sabre blades and boarding pikes, as balanced for an instant in the air, they came crashing down upon the heads of the combatants. We soon obtained a footing upon the forecastle of the ship, and drove the enemy towards the quarter deck. They continued to pour the shot into us at a fearful rate; but our boys maddened by the sight of their fallen comrades fought blindly. It was blood,—all blood! Even now, I sicken at the recollection of it. It was indeed a fearful struggle. At one time, I turned my eye towards our little vessel, as she continued closely entangled in the rigging of the ship,—and not a single man, or boy of her surviving crew, could I discover on board of her. They were, to a man, struggling with me upon that slippery deck.

"An idea now occurred to me, as I turned my eyes hurriedly over the side of the ship, and observed our disparity of size. Lying close under the quarter of the man-of-war, if we could work our starboard guns, we could bore her betwixt wind and water; while her own shot would pass above our decks, and spend their fury upon our spars and rigging.

"'Back to your decks men, and man the starboard guns' shouted I;—and in another moment, they had cleared away the wreck and litter from the main deck, and were prepared to work the guns with renewed energy;—and as the last surviving man of us, sprang from the bulwarks of the enemy, to our own,—they poured a broadside into her, which crashing through the timbers, drove a hurricane of shot and splinters across her crowded decks, and made her scuppers run afresh with human gore.

"'Give it to them again, boys!'—and again the iron and wooden death, thinned the ranks of the English. But all this time, the foe was by no means idle. After our second broadside, they had returned to their larboard guns, and rapidly discharged them over our heads; but they were comparatively harmless, from their high range.

"We continued to work away with unflagging energy. I could see that our shots were telling fearfully upon the ship, and tearing great holes through her sides. Suddenly, the firing ceased, and there seemed to be an extraordinary commotion on board of her.

"'They are preparing to board us!—stand to your posts, men!'

"But no!—she has now another foe, than man to contend with. A little cloud of blue smoke is seen issuing from her main hatch. Presently we heard a hurried running to and fro over the lower decks; and then the splash, splash, of buckets of water, dashed violently upon the sides of the ship. She was on fire!

"'Cut loose our fore rigging!' I yelled to the men on the forecastle; and soon axes were slashing in among the hamper, which held the two vessels together; and we broke away from the ship, and forged ahead of her,—where we obtained a raking position. But as I was about to improve it, our whole attention was absorbed in watching a dense column of black smoke, that poured out of her hatchways and ports. The next moment, a bright scarlet flame shot upwards from her main hatch, and spreading, streamed out at the ports, and crept up the masts and rigging.

"The firey serpents crawled over the decks,—up on to the bulwarks, and along the tarry ropes, devouring the rails, as they came down by the run,—licking up the splinters and litter, which lay strewn confusedly about,—and soon the gallant ship was enveloped in the fiery pall. But still through all this terrific scene, the proud old British union, waved defiantly upon the breeze; and the guns, as they became heated, continued to give out their sullen notes of battle.

"The surviving officers and crew of the Tigress, gathered upon her quarter deck, and scorning to solicit quarter, stood heroicly awaiting their doom.

"I hailed them with my trumpet, and begged them, for God's sake, to seek shelter on board my vessel. But no!—they either did not, or would not hear;—and though all my boats had been lowered into the sea, and our brave fellows, forgetful of their recent hot blood, now stood ready for the word, to fly to their rescue,—they refused all aid.

"Our vessel had now drifted some distance to leeward of the burning ship; and while we were still gazing tearfully upon the fearful sight of a noble ship, with a crew of gallant men, sacrificing themselves to the pitiless element, rather than yield to their fellow-men,—a black mountain of smoke and vapor, rose suddenly from the sea, where she lay,—a bright, blinding flash gleamed over the waves,—a dull, heavy, stunning roar, which seemed to vibrate to the very bottom of the ocean, and we were *alone* upon the deep!—only a few portions of wreck and broken furniture, a few dismembered and lifeless bodies, remained, of what, a moment before, was—His Majesty's Sloop-of-War Tigress."

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MEMORIES OF ——.

BY SALLIE M. BRYAN.

"Thou canst not wholly perish, though the sod
Sink with its violets closer to thy breast—
Though, by the feet of generations trod,
The head-stone crumbles from thy place of rest."

Beauty in dust! It is the common story.
Scarce had the morning stars together sung
Their first glad hymn of burning love and glory
Ere tears of blood from human hearts were wrung,
To gush above a grave in whose deep breast
A young, bright form had found undreaming rest.

But never in the earth's all-quiet bosom
Was laid a sweeter, brighter shape than thine;
Never will mourning roses bud and blossom
O'er the last sleep of beauty more divine.
Oh, thy fair form will linger in my dreams
Till life's last light fades from their twilight beams.

Thou daring boy, and beautiful as daring,
Though changing years have passed me since we met,
The loveliness I saw thy childhood wearing
Has been a thing too wild'ring to forget;
And—but thou art not in the dust and gloom,
Though gone forever from *earth's* light and bloom.

Oh, when thy young heart's fiery life was rushing
In crimson streams before thy startled eye,
And thou didst know by its fast, feverish gushing,
That in thy youth's sweet dream-time thou must die,
How fearful was the agony represt,
Bright, reckless boy, in thy proud, silent breast.

I dream upon thy dark eye's burning splendor,
By its black, heavy lashes sweetly vailed,
Thy voice so deep and musical and tender,
Thy cheek that passion soon had flushed or paled—
Ay, all the grace thy radiant boyhood wore,
Till my heart yearns to look on thee once more.

And oft when Night is dreaming in the Heaven,
And angels are abroad among the stars,
When to the breeze's sigh a sound is given
That seems the music from the Eden-bars—
I see the young moon wander through the blue,
And gaze thro' space as if to see thee too.

Sleep on—sleep on—the eternal music sweeping
From Nature's lyres no more shall reach thine ear,
The sun's glad smiling and the storm's wild weeping,
The meteor-gleam of joy—the lingering fear,
The myrtle-blooming and the Upas-blight,
Have ceased to give thee sorrow or delight.

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ANDREW WAITLAND'S LIFE.

AN EPISODE OF WAR.

BY MARY C. VAUGHAN.

In a long day's ride one might scarcely hope to find so happy a family as that of Andrew Waitland. Their happiness was not dependent upon wealth, nor luxury, nor high station, nor any of the external appointments of splendid living. They were poor, and their home was a whitewashed log cabin, situated in the midst of a clearing made by Andrew's ax wielded by his strong arms.

The family consisted of Andrew, his wife Helen, and two little chubby, cherry-cheeked children, who played all day in the sun, and grew ruddy, and strong, and beautiful their parents believed.

The honest pair were well content with their lot, not because they did not hope to better it in future, but because they had prophecy of that future in their fertile, well-watered acres, and in their own untiring industry and economy.

Like most parents, they had already commenced laying plans for their children, and were living far more for them than for themselves. Each night they went, before they betook themselves to rest, to look upon their sleeping little ones, and to ask the blessing of God upon them. In the morning their first thoughts went toward the little bed where their children lay. All day at work—Andrew wielding the ax or following the plough, Helen busied with household cares or plying the needle—they thought for, toiled for, these precious ones. Loving each other very truly, their love only seemed perfected in this mutual devotion to a common charge.

Harsh upon the calm of this happy life fell the alarm of war. A new contest between America and Great Britain had commenced. The war of 1812 had been declared. His country called, and Andrew Waitland, good husband, loving father, earnest patriot, could not resist the call. His home was to be defended, his rights, menaced in the wrongs inflicted upon his native land, to be asserted.

A swift rider dashing along the forest road stopped at the clearing just long enough to summon Andrew to join a detachment of militia at a frontier town, a half day's journey distant. Like Putnam, our Cincinnatus left his plough in the furrow, shouldered his musket and knapsack, spoke his hasty, but fervent and not tearless farewell to his wife and little ones, and then sturdily wended his way to the camp.

Helen watched him as he moved steadily along the embowered road, the sun gleaming through interstices of the foliage upon the bright barrel of his musket, and lighting his waving brown hair as he turned, before he disappeared beyond the slight eminence that bounded her view, and waved his cap in a last farewell.

Helen was a courageous woman, a true patriot, and ready to make her share of sacrifices for the common weal. She had not allowed herself to doubt the probability of Andrew's return. But, nevertheless, as she thus looked upon his mute salutation, and waved her snowy apron in return, it was with a sinking of the heart, a sudden stagnation of the life-blood, as the danger of the battle-field rose vividly before her. She turned away and wept.

But her tears were soon dried. She had little leisure for the indulgence of demonstrative grief. In an hour she was going cheerfully about her daily toil, and already picturing to herself the return of her beloved husband. Vivid as was her imagination, it did not serve to delineate the scene of the meeting, that was to come.

Days, weeks passed, and Andrew did not return. The expected battle, which caused the sudden summons of the militia, had been fought. Andrew had escaped its perils uninjured, but his term of services had not ended with the emergency which called him from home. The militia had moved onward to the defence of another point, and he had been forced to accompany them without visiting his home.

In vain Helen watched and waited for his coming. In vain at morning and evening she scanned the forest road. In vain the children asked for their father, and sobbed themselves to sleep with his name upon their lips. Still he came not. Amidst the varied dangers of war, Helen seldom heard from him even, and her heart was often heavy with fearful apprehensions.

At length, after many months, a letter in the well-known handwriting reached her. It was dated at a distant seaport whither the chances of war had carried him, and informed her that her husband was about going to sea. Vessels were fitting out for naval service, and he had been induced to enlist. There were directions for the management of his little farm, a sum of money, and many loving messages. His farewell words commended wife and children to the care of Providence, and were written in the hope of a not distant return.

Helen's heart grew heavier at these tidings, but with cheerful alacrity she addressed herself to the performance of the double duties that now fell upon her. And so months passed away in toil scarcely lightened by a hope. Then came the news of a great battle at sea. Andrew's ship had fallen into the hands of the enemy, and the crew were either killed or prisoners. Which fate had befallen him she could not learn.

Widowed in heart, she still kept on her hard and rugged path. Her children were growing in strength and beauty. With them she could not be wholly desolate, for them no toil nor exertion seemed too great.

The months rolled into years. Once came a rumor that Andrew had been long a prisoner in a British prison ship, but had been discharged or exchanged. But it was only a rumor, and the faint hope it excited died out when he neither returned, nor sent any tidings of his welfare.

Years had now passed since his departure. Helen had long mourned him as dead, and looked upon her children as orphans. Women, who amidst prosperity, and with no especial draft upon their energies, would pass through life without the development of any but common place characteristics, often in adversity show themselves equal to all emergencies. This was the case with Mrs. Waitland.

Her husband left her in a tiny log cabin, situated in a clearing of partially tilled land. Ten years after his departure, a fine farm, a comfortable, though plain framed house, surrounded with all the appurtenances of agricultural life, occupied the place of the clearing and the cabin. A woman, dressed always in widow's weeds, still young and fair, though wearing the sedateness of middle life, a boy and a girl standing on the verge of manhood and womanhood, dwelt in the farmhouse. The little cabin, still standing half concealed in the grove that sheltered the larger house, was the home of the stout countryman who tilled the farm under Mrs. Waitland's direction, and of his buxom wife, who assisted in the care of the dairy. The widow Waitland, as she was now called, was looked upon as a prosperous woman.

And prosperity continued to attend her. According to the rural estimates of wealth she was rich. Her acres were fertile, and her crops always of the best. Her children were well educated, dutiful, and affectionate, and save for the dark shadow of her misfortune, she would have been a happy woman.

After a time the calm life of the little household was disturbed. The son brought home a wife; the daughter left her childhood's home for that of a husband. Peace still prevailed, but there was an infusion of new interests into the home life, a breaking of some of its delicate links. The widow was not altogether so happy as of old. She had given up the management of the home-farm to her son, and his wife was now mistress, where she had so long reigned. She was restless without her accustomed employments, and though she had abdicated her authority with a good grace, the habit was too strong to be readily laid aside, and it came to pass that there was some covert jealousy of power between the old and new mistresses of the household.

Nobody was surprised, then, when Mrs. Waitland and Squire Graham were married. The Squire was a widower scarcely past middle age. His children had all left him for other homes, or had sought pursuits beyond the home-circle. He was rich and well esteemed, and took his middle-aged, but still handsome bride, to a fine stately home near the county town, where there were good society, and many privileges, from which her remote residence had hitherto debarred her. Few doubted that Andrew Waitland was dead, and all knew that his long absence had legally dissolved the marriage bond, even if he were living.

The life of Mrs. Graham was very calm and pleasant in her new home. She and her husband were well suited to each other, and felt a mutual attachment, that might have been stronger, though less demonstrative, than the passion of youth. Here years rolled away scarcely marked by change to the inmates of the mansion. Imperceptibly age encroached upon them, making his progress with snowy tints among their hair, with wrinkles, and slight, but warning decrepitude. They were growing old together, and hand-in-hand were nearing the foot of life's descent.

One summer evening they sat together, in pleasant converse, upon the broad verandah that encircled their home, when a man, aged, worn, crippled, and coarsely dressed, appeared upon the scene. Time had left no traces of youthful comeliness upon his scarred and weather-worn features, but his voice was scarcely changed. At its first sound a crowd of memories and associations rushed upon Mrs. Graham's soul. Its tones assured her that, after two score years of wandering, Andrew Waitland had returned.

Over such a meeting one must needs draw the vail of silence. Time and absence had builded a great wall between these long divided beings. A wall so high that only intangible memories could pass it. But their meeting was solemn and sacred.

The first agitated greetings over, Andrew Waitland sat down between the woman who had been his wife, and the man who now claimed her as his own, and told the story of the eight strange lustrums that had passed away since the war-summons called him from his home.

He told how, in the excitement of battles, and marches, and busy camp life, it had gradually grown easier for him to endure absence and separation from wife and children. How at last, being discharged in a distant seaport, he had been induced by the glittering prospect of easy victories and much prize money, to enlist in the sea service of his country. How, for long, his ship had been victorious in every engagement. How, when sailing homeward, with high hopes, they had encountered the enemy's fleet, and defeat and capture had followed. And, in trembling tones, he recounted the sufferings of the prison-hulk, protracted through months and years, during which no opportunity of communicating with his family ever occurred; and told how he had pined for home, for the familiar voices, and the loves and pleasures of his once humble but happy lot.

At length he was discharged. At length the thought of return shaped itself into action. His passage was engaged in a ship bound for New York. With the morning tide they were to sail, and at twilight he walked upon the pier, and looked off, hopefully, to the vessel, riding at anchor, that was to convey him to his native land. Suddenly, in the growing darkness, he felt himself siezed from behind. In an instant he was surrounded by armed men, and hurried away. His expostulations were answered by blows, his cries silenced by a gag.

He was the victim of a press-gang. In the morning he found himself on board a British frigate, and saw the ship on which he was to have sailed going down in the distance, a fair wind wafting her towards his distant home.

The hope of escape alone made his fate endurable. Again and again he attempted it in vain, sailing over the world, and at every port renewing his efforts. So years wore on. With the hope of escape ever vivid, he had never written, because he intended always to carry the tidings of his life and safety to his family.

At length, in a British port, he concerted his last plan. To aid in his escape he had engaged some desperate fellows, whom he believed he had won by lavish use of his prize money. Just as his hopes seemed on the eve of realization his confederates made him their victim. They had been engaged in a robbery, and finding discovery imminent, contrived to throw suspicion on him. He was arrested, on seeming proof convicted, and sentenced to transportation to the penal settlements of Australia. He went out a stalwart man, of middle age. When, in the course of time, he made his escape from his bitter, enforced servitude, he was an old and decrepid man, maimed, scarred, broken in health and hope.

One only wish followed his freedom. To look again upon those he had deserted, and then to die and be buried in his native soil. At least one portion of his wish had been gratified, he had seen Helen, and on the morrow he would visit his children. But the lapse of years and the current of events had made him a stranger to those once dearest and most familiar. His wife was his no longer, but the honored, beloved companion of another. The children he had left in infancy were now past the meridian of life, and surrounded by another generation. His dearest wish was now to die, since life had so few charms, and change had robbed him of all his long-cherished hopes.

And very soon his wish was granted. He died beneath the roof of his son, in sight of the scene of that long-past parting. He died tended by his children, and with the hand of Helen clasped in his. Since all earthly fruitions were denied him, since she who had been the wife of his bosom, was his no longer, since his children were strangers, and his familiar friends had forgotten him, it was well so. It was the happiest ending of a hopeless life of struggle and suffering. And though there were many tears shed over his grave, they were more for the unfulfilled hopes and promises of his life than for its close—they were less for him than for all the wasted boon of his years, and for his purposeless sufferings.

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"GIVE ME SOMETHING TO COMFORT ME."

So said a young girl to an older female friend; and she added: "What has been said about your feeble health makes me feel sad. I am going to be alone this evening and night, and I am afraid I shall be very unhappy. Can't you find me something to read that will make me feel as I ought?" Her friend opened the Bible at the fourteenth chapter of John, and gave it to her—("Let not your heart be troubled," etc.) The next morning they met, and the younger said: "How did you know where to find the very passage that was best for me? I began to read it, and soon felt my unhappiness leave me. What if I should lose you! It would not be very long, and it would be much better for you. And then I should be left in this world no longer than would be best for me. The time would soon pass away, even if it were several years; and then I should meet you again with other friends. It is not hard to bear our troubles here in this world awhile, when we have such comforting words to read as those which you gave me."

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TEACH GOOD THINGS TO CHILDREN.

Yes, teach them, in a pleasant way, the best things you can find, beginning with texts, psalms, and hymns. Then teach them how to use them, by using them yourself, in adversity, sickness, or solitude; and show by your example that they do you good and give you pleasure. You may thus give to every young person within your reach, as it were, the best kind of books, nay, a library, of such a nature that they may carry it with them all their lives, read it at midnight, and never lose or wear it out. Such things have proved like life-preservers to the soul. Attached to the mind by the band of memory, and inflated with the air of Heaven, they sometimes are seen buoying up one in the waves of life, and safely bearing him on, through the storms, to a port of happiness. Those of us whose minds have been stored in childhood with such treasures by wise and good parents or friends, ought to value them aright, and to feel the duty incumbent on us, of doing to others what has been done to us.

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SUPERIORITY OF OUR SCHOOLS.

An American teacher, recently returned from England, reports that our public and private schools generally are decidedly better than those of Great Britain. The following are his views of some of the principal causes: The differences of rank operate in England very powerfully and extensively against the improvement of general education. The children of the royal family are, of course, brought up in seclusion. They are not allowed to be placed on a level with any others. Those of the nobility, in like manner, are kept by themselves; while such as aim at rivaling them, however distantly, imitate them in the manner of bringing up their children. The gentry, the rich, and the aspiring, many of them, have private tutors, or at least do not heartily encourage regular schools. Thus a vast proportion of the influence and wealth is lost to such institutions as flourish most in the United States; and British schools are generally much behind our own.

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ROBERT BONNER, Editor and Proprietor.

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OUR RELATIONS WITH CHINA.

The announcement that a treaty has been concluded by the American Minister to China, as well as by the Ministers of England and France, whereby the trade of that vast empire is opened to our commerce in common with theirs, has been the subject of great rejoicing in our exchanges.

We are not surprised at such a popular effect of such a world-concerning announcement. It is no insignificant event which it heralds. We join heartily in the exultations which it has invited. But we confess we do so not without some commingling of doubts and fears as to the permanency of the arrangements into which the Celestials have been represented as cordially entering with the "outside barbarians" of the three great commercial countries named, by those who have come forward as their commissioners. We would not start a doubt as to the sincerity of the treaty, on the part of the framers of it. But we *do* doubt the preparation of the Chinese for a faithful and steady adherence to its provisions, torn as they still are into factions, and at war as they are ever disposed to be among themselves. But, besides this consideration, we know that this is not the first treaty-making operation in which the Celestials have joined their Pagan hands with those of Christians in pledges of "lasting peace and friendship." Going no further back than the rejection, in 1841, of the treaty made by Keying, and his degradation, by the emperor, for making it, we remember that a treaty with the English was duly concluded and even ratified the very year following!

But notwithstanding all unfavorable indications as to a due degree of probity and stability on the part of the Chinese, we are glad our Minister has given them a trial. Good to them as well as ourselves cannot fail to be eliminated in the end, whatever the fate of our treaty with them.

LIFE.

We frequently meet with expressions in cotemporary articles, floating about in magazines and newspapers, where the duration of Human Life is discussed or alluded to, which pain and sometime shock us by their materialism. The importance of existence seems to consist in its mere duration, and not in that which marks it. Now, of what benefit is a protracted existence—one reaching even to an hundred years—if it is unmarked by good deeds and noble aspirations? What matters the life of an oyster after the attainment of its full growth? What the crawling on through year after year of a venemous, slimy serpent, defiling the bower and watching for its victims? Human Life does not consist merely in the throbs of the pulse, or the circulation of the blood, or the opening of the eyelids, or the filling of the stomach, or the locomotion of the feet. These are but the machinery for That which gives them any value whatever. And what is That? The very Soul, alive in every Spiritual nerve to the Good, the True and the Beautiful: always cognizant of its appointed work; always filling its social duties; always feeling bent upon it, in loving but awful sleeplessness, the Eternal Eye from the inmost recess of the Universe. To say that such or such a man was fortunate merely because he, that is, his body, lived for seventy-five years, is the most arrant, and indeed disgusting nonsense. What the soul did in that body for seventy-five years? is the question. Humanly speaking, the longer exists a body which is not the machinery for Good, the worse for its Vital Principle and for mankind.

A WORD IN TIME.

As the season for out-door pursuits and amusements is fast passing away, and that for indoor pursuits and amusements is near at hand, we want to say a word, which we hope may be timely, to the thousands of young men who are constant readers of the Ledger. To you the approaching winter shall prove a blessing or a curse, young friends, as you *will* it to turn out. If you spend your evenings in drinking-saloons, or worse places, instead of evening-schools or lecture-rooms, sad will be the consequences to you. Tell us not that you lack the means to attend upon the lecturer's or the teacher's instructions. The evening-school is open to you without charge for either tuition or books, and you can enter the lecture saloon for far less than it costs you to enter the drinking-saloon. Save your squandered "small change," which you have been wont to spend otherwise, and buy books with it, for perusal during the long evenings that are coming. If you really think you cannot pay the charges at the bookstores or the public libraries, buy at the bookstands, or hire there. You will be none the less benefited by the old book, almost backless though it be, than by the new and sound one. But at any rate, or anyhow that you can, so long as it be honestly, get books—and get knowledge.

THE SCHOOLMASTER.

There is no greater proof of the advancement of man in the right direction, than his increased and increasing respect for those whose necessary, noble and sacred profession is the education of youth—those whose "turn" upon the stage of human progression is so rapidly approaching. No doubt, one principal cause of the disappointment of the schoolmaster in former days, is to be found in the pre-eminence of the glories of war over the quieter but really more glorious exploits of peace. Noble families almost invariably furnished the military heroes, while the true elevators of humanity sprung from the common people—for instance, Arkwright, Fulton, Franklin, Pestalozzi, the great teacher. Things are changed now; the vast majority of civilized mankind *do* believe that there is more real glory in the achievements of the rainbowed workshop than in the cloud-covered field of war, consequently the "heroes of peace," among them the instructor of youth, are reaping the most honored and the most enduring laurels.

In view of this glorious change in the opinions of mankind, how beautiful it is to look back through the centuries, and see Cicero, prophet-like, standing up "amidst the storm and stress" of the Roman Republic, to twine the laurels of his eloquence round the head of the poet Archias, his early schoolmaster; "stirring in the breast of the street rabble a momentary reverence for good letters and the fair humanities, whereof his aged teacher was his representative, and bearing on the swell and dash of his great rhetoric the name of that humble man else long forgotten, down to our time."

That most beautiful and touching letter which Daniel Webster, in his last days, wrote to his old schoolmaster, Mr. Tappan, will endure as long as the great statesman's greatest speeches.

There is something sublime in the lines of Wordsworth, in his last poem, about his teacher—

> "I turned aside
> To seek the grave, where, 'mid a throng of graves,
> An honored teacher of my youth was laid.
> He loved the poets, and, if now alive,
> Would have loved me, as one not destitute
> Of promise, nor belying the kind hope
> That he had formed, when I, at his command,
> Began to spin with toil my earliest songs."

Reader, do you wish the coming generation of thinkers and workers to excel the present? Do you wish mankind to acquire still higher eminences on the mountains of Toil and Truth? Then honor those whom Cicero, Webster and Wordsworth honored. All hail! all honor to the schoolmaster, whom Brougham has well said "is abroad!"

PROVERBS.

We have always been an admirer of proverbs: they are the "*multum in parvo*," gold trebly refined, brains solidified without being ossified. The best thing that Lord John Russell ever said—a thing that will survive all his speeches—is his definition of the proverb, "One man's wit and all men's wisdom." Now, we have at our finger ends somewhere between one hundred and fifty and three hundred of these imperishable lumps of gold; yet have no intention of making our readers over-opulent by offering them all at once. But we will present a few, and select those that we do present, because they are not so much in vogue as they ought to be.

"Grace is to the body what good sense is to the mind."

"A man's own good breeding is the best security against other people's ill-manners"

"Nothing so much prevents our being natural as our desire of appearing so."

Curious as it may seem, many of our greatest poets owe much of their popularity to those lines which, on account of their truth, general applicability, and terseness, have passed into the proverb. Shakespeare says:

> "The evil that men do, lives after them;
> The good is oft interred with their bones.
> "Solitude is sometimes best society."
> "Trifles light as air
> Are to the jealous confirmations strong
> As proofs of holy writ."

Burns sings:

> "The rank is but the guinea's stamp,
> A man's a man for a' that."

Pope speaks of the

> "Ruling passions strong in death."

And Beattie sighs—

> "Ah, who can tell how hard it is to climb!"

Who after these will dare to deny the poet's common sense. But as to that, the best and purest sentiments of the bards are founded on that treasure—common sense. The tenderest and most brilliant flower must have common earth to spring from.

THE TEN THOUSAND.

We have been greatly pained and astonished to hear of ten thousand children applying in vain for admission to our city public schools. Pained that such an army of boys and girls, the future makers, to a great extent, of the destiny of this city and State, should plead for knowledge and have it refused to them; astonished that, after so many hundreds of thousands of dollars have been expended for teachers and buildings, even a single child must beg for "light" in vain. It is beyond our comprehension. We are not willing to think that any portion of the money has been misappropriated; we know that millions, intended for purposes other than educational, are embezzled, stolen and squandered; but can it be that corruption has become so heartless, so brazen-faced, so rampant, so utterly godless, as to lay its sacrilegious hands on the holy shrines of education? on the fountains of knowledge? on the poor little child's patrimony?

Is it corruption? or is it mismanagement? or is it that we have not voted a sufficient sum? If the first, exterminate the scoundrels; if the second, appoint new and better managers; if the third, expend more money. The children *must* be educated!

CHARITY.

Charity to the poor and disabled is one of the most prominent and glorious characteristics of Christianity. Whenever we may feel ourselves becoming cold to the principle or emotion, let us remember that "Charity" was considered a duty even in pagan Athens. One of her most illustrious orators informs us, that no citizen was permitted to remain destitute of the necessaries of life. If such was the case in an old heathen city, how much more important that the same course should hold good in modern and Christian countries!

WHY?

Why do parents, generally, send their children to school, year after year, without ever putting their own feet inside the doors of the school-house, or even communicating with the teachers? Is it enough that their children "go to school?" Is this the whole of the parent's concern? Does this satisfy his sense of parental duty? We fear it *does*, in most cases, and hence the need of calling attention to the subject before us, as we do, in the hope of awakening delinquents to their whole duty.

FRESH FERN LEAVES.

Entered according to Act of Congress, in the year 1855, by Robert Bonner, in the Clerk's Office of the District Court for the Southern District of New York.

A STORY FOR THE CHILDREN.

And so you are "sorry it is Sunday." That is a pity. I would like to make Sunday the pleasantest day of the whole week to you. I should not require you to sit still, with your hands folded. I could not do that myself, so I am sure I should not expect it of a restless little child. I should not make you read all day, because I should know you would get too weary to understand what you were reading; I should be almost sure when my eye was off you, or my back turned, that you would pull a string out of your pocket to play with, or tie your handkerchief up in knots, or fall asleep. I should expect if I did so that you would say, "I am sorry Sunday has come." I know that a great many very good people think very differently from me about these things; but I can't help thinking, when I hear their children say, "I am sorry Sunday has come," that *I* am more right than *they*. I can't help thinking that we should not require of little children what we cannot do ourselves; for I have seen many grown people who got tired of reading, lie down and *sleep away Sunday* because they did not know what else to do with it, who, at the same time, expected *the children* to sit stock still on their chairs, as "whist" as a mouse, or, at any rate, left them to yawn over their books, and long for Monday, just as they themselves do, only they are not as honest as the children, who *say* so. Let me tell you a story:

Gertrude's father was dead. He loved Gertrude better than anything in the world except Gertrude's mother. He was never weary of her—never too tired with business to kiss her when he came home. On Sunday he took her on his knee, and told her how cunning little Moses looked in his little cradle in the bulrushes, where his mother had placed him, hoping that the king's daughter would take him for her own baby, and so keep him from being killed like the other little Hebrew babies; and then Gertrude would ask him all sorts of questions about it, and clap her little hands when the king's daughter did take him, and chose his own dear mother (though she did not know her to be his mother) to be his nurse. And then Gertrude would wonder how this nurse could possibly keep from telling little Moses, when he got big enough to understand her, that she *was* his own mother; and then she would say, "Oh, papa, I know they *did* have nice times when nobody was by to see the poor Hebrew mother kiss her own baby."

Well—when they had done talking about that, Gertrude's father would tell her of the little Syrian maid who cured the sick prophet; and the story of Daniel, and the story of the ravens who fed Elijah; and then by-and-by the bells would ring for church, and Gertrude would take hold of her father's hand and walk along with him past the beautiful fields, where the tall grass waved, and the little ground bird built her nest, and down the winding grassy road, under the shady oaks, and elms, and maples, round whose trunks the sweet brier and wild grape climbed, and then Gertrude would stop to pick the wild roses; and her Papa did not tell her it was "wicked" or wrong to gather flowers on Sunday, but he would tell her to bring him a clover blossom, or a daisy, or a rose, and show her how different they were one from the other in shape, color and perfume, and yet how beautiful was each; and then he would show her the dew-drops strung upon the blades of grass glistening in the sunlight; and the contented cattle, their tired necks relieved from the heavy yoke lying in the shade, thanking God for Sunday *by enjoying it*, teaching us a dumb lesson which we should do well to learn, always keeping in mind that we have souls while they have not. Well—then Gertrude and her Papa went into church. Gertrude liked the singing very much; her Papa sung beside her, and sometimes, after looking cautiously round, for she was a timid little thing, she would sing softly too, her little finger moving along the line of the hymn they were singing. Gertrude did not understand all the sermon, her Papa did not expect that she would, but he always took her to church half a day, because the minister never forgot that little children had souls, and always had something to say to them in every sermon. After church when Gertrude skipped along home like a little kid, by his side, her father did not think it a sin, or say "sh—sh"—when she gave a merry little laugh because God had made the world so fair and given her so much love and happiness that she could not possibly keep it all pent up in her little heart; not he—he patted her pure uplifted forehead, and the world seemed very fair to him too, and Sunday very blessed.

Gertrude's father has blessed Sabbaths still—but not on earth; and little Gertrude with her warm trusting heart has passed from his pleasant smile, and sheltering arms, over the threshold of a strange, cold home. Sunday comes and goes to little Gertrude, but oh how wearily! They who have the care of her, think that God is pleased with long faces, and so Gertrude is placed in a chair after breakfast Sunday morning, and forbidden to stir till the bell rings for church; she may not step out on the piazza to see God smile on the green earth; she may not enjoy the blue sky, or bright flowers, which he has spread out to make the Sabbath "a delight;" she must fix her eyes on a book, and read—read—read—till her brain reels, and then she goes to church morning—afternoon—evening—till at last *she* too has learned to say, "I am so sorry 'tis Sunday."

Fanny Fern.

NATIONAL CHARACTERISTICS.

Speaking generally—the English may be characterized as the "solid," dominative, eating people; the Scotch as the canny, thrifty, hair-splitting, calculating people; the Irish as the don't-care-for-to-morrow, imaginative, fighting people; the French as the "glory," fickle, *recherche* people; the Germans as the thoughtful, quietly-passionate, honest people; the Italians as the artistic, intriguing, volcanic people; the Spanish as the grave, revengeful, highfalutin people; the Americans as the nervous, hopeful, reading, proud, indomitable, sublimated, "go-ahead" people.

THE MORAL MORIBUNDS.

Painful as is the phenomenon of physical death, and deeply as we may sympathize with the dying, while we condole with his friends, there is a class of dying ones upon whom it is infinitely more mournful to look. We allude to the *moral moribunds* whom one encounters at every turn—those who die while they live—who, in fact, live only to die. It is a saying, derived from the mythologists, as its wording shows, that those whom the gods love die young. If this be true of physical death, it would seem equally true that they whom the devils love die young, in a moral sense.

A PORTRAIT FROM MY GALLERY.

BY MARY FORREST.

Nell Moore lives over the way. Our windows look into each other all day long, and, by little and little, we have grown into the same habit, and struck a sympathy, though Dear knows there never were two beings more antipodal. I watch her motions as I do the play of the lightning—perhaps I see something of the same fearful, inexplicable element in them—while she calls me "Sphinx," says my calm eyes make her wicked, and puts the imp in her to its maddest capers, when she thinks I am looking.

Now Nell is a flirt. Nature meant her for one, and made her up accordingly, round, lithe, jaunty and saucy. She was born, as a well-ordered coquette should be, in April, and her face is like an April sky—shadow and sunshine running a race, and a mischievous sprite of a soul playing leap-frog with both. Her eyes are black, and irredeemably wicked. No sorrow can subdue them. The tears they let fall steal up from a fountain into which *they have never looked*, and leave no trace. These eyes are marvelously versatile in enchanting power. Outleaping, retreating, lifting, drooping, floating, pirouetting, they would startle Diogenes himself from his tub, and then laugh at his inflammable cynicism.

Your true coquette is a paradox; so a meek little nun of a mouth sits at the feet of these imp-eyes, discoursing music and prophecy. You linger spell-bound; you have found the true combination—coquetry and truth have met together—Beauty and Peace have kissed each other, when out gurgles a wild laugh that is clearly in league with the wicked black eyes; your nun and sybil disappear, and you, too, if you are wise.

Nell is neither shy nor mealy-mouthed. She does not squeeze your hand under the table and kiss you in the dark, and talk transcendent proprieties before folks. She is an out and out, confessed, predestined flirt. She believes there was a conspiracy in the outset, that Dame Nature is responsible, and so goes about fulfilling her destiny with an outrightness and energy worthy of better ends. Her coquetries are as spontaneous as her pulses. If she is "demure and proper" for a day, she has a stifled look as if she had been living a lie, and you reproach yourself for asking her to be other than she is.

Her very audacity protects her. She stands within a sphere which it is evident may not be invaded, while she touches off her light artillery with a grace and assurance that do a dreadful work outside.

Nell is no respecter of persons. Following dreamily in her train are gray-haired men and beardless boys, who die one after another, "of a rose in aromatic pain," and saucy Nell Moore kisses her hand to their remains, and leaves them by the wayside.

Occasionally her heart would seem to feel the merest vibration from the near flight of some shining arrow. "Poor Tom!" she said to me yesterday, in allusion to one who had just broken down under her spells—"poor Tom! I *wish* he had held out a little longer, he had such *wonderful eyes*." Then again I find her weeping like Alexander—"no more worlds to conquer"—her game of hearts exhausted.

I see her now, over the way; her little, dimpled hands weaving unimagined *hocus pocuses*, and her mad eyes dancing a jig in the very face of a well known Doctor Divine. The odds are against the white cravat, as I pull down my shade.

ANTIPATHIES.

The most profoundly ludicrous point connected with this subject is the theory of *national* antipathies—a monstrosity gravely contended for in "the good old times," and affording matter to a sapient writer in the seventeenth century, for a goodly treatise on the delectable doctrine. This worthy was a Spanish doctor, by name and title Don Carlos Garcia, who published, at Rouen, in 1627, a book entitled *Antipatia de los Franceses y Espagnoles*—"Antipathies between Frenchmen and Spaniards." This furnished materials, some time afterwards, for a tract on the same subject by La Mothe le Vayer, whose object was to nourish the dislike then subsisting in France against Spain; and he hoped, by arguments and assertions like the following, to convince his countrymen that this feeling was not less national than natural: "The Frenchman is tall, the Spaniard short; the one has the skin generally *fair*, the other dark; the Frenchman eats much and quickly, the Spaniard sparingly and slow; the Frenchman serves the boiled meat first, the Spaniard the roast; the Frenchman pours the water on the wine, the Spaniard the wine on the water; the Frenchman speaks freely at table, the Spaniard does not say a word; the Frenchman walks after dinner, the Spaniard sits still or sleeps. The Frenchman, in order to make a sign to any one to come to him, raises his hand and brings it towards his face, the Spaniard, for the same object, lowers his, and motions it towards his feet; the Frenchman kisses a lady on saluting her, the Spaniard looks on such a liberty with horror; the Frenchman esteems the favors of his mistress in proportion as they are known, the Spaniard values nothing so much as secrecy in love. The Frenchman wears his clothes of one fashion, and the Spaniard of another, which, taken from head to foot, are totally unlike. The first puts on his doublet after all the rest, the second commences to dress himself by that; the Frenchmen buttons himself from the color to the waist, the Spaniard begins at the bottom and finishes at the chin. The Frenchman reduced to want sells everything but his shirt; it is the first article that the Spaniard disposes of, keeping his sword and his cloak till the last extremity." Such is the serio-comic absurdity by which the French and Spaniards were taught to believe in national antipathies two hundred years ago.

LIGHT.

Poet never yet uttered a sublimer and more pregnant apostrophe than "Hail holy light!" And well does a late writer call it the very life blood of Nature—the fountain of all our knowledge of the external universe—in the Daguerreotype and Photograph becoming the historiographer of the visible creation, recording and transmitting to future ages all that is beautiful and sublime in organic and inorganic nature, and stamping on perennial tablets the hallowed scenes of domestic life and the ever-varying phases of social intercourse. The science of light has given the telescope and the microscope, thus opening to our vision the Suns and worlds

> "Wheeling unshaken through the void immense,"

and revealing the universe of living creatures on the petal of the flower, the living emerald of the leaf and in the smallest drop of water.

The principle of light, moral, mental and physical, is what every true man and woman is always in search of. Old Ajax "through all the dark and desperate fight" cried for it; the Laplander longs for it; the Christian prays for it; the world would perish without it; Heaven woos us because it is full of it.

WIT AND WISDOM.

ORIGINAL AND SELECTED—PREPARED EXPRESSLY FOR THE LEDGER BY GEO. D. PRENTICE.

If all the innumerable faults and forgotten faiths, and all the myriads of men who have contentedly died in their belief after having spent long lives in hating or persecuting those who disbelieved them, could be presented at once to our apprehension and sight, what a lowering impression it would give of human reason, and how forcibly it would inculcate distrust of our own opinions and toleration toward those of others.

Some persons, with apparent zeal, vindicate their friends from all their little peccadillos, whitewash them very carefully, and then knock them on the head by lamenting their addiction to some gross impropriety. They are somewhat like the Roman priests, who, when an ox was not completely white, chalked over the dark spots, and, leading him up to the altar, dispatched him with a blow.

Some writers think they ought to have the favorable regard of posterity because they bestow a great deal of labor upon their works. But, if hardships are a good title to immortality, it often belongs much less to the writer than to the reader.

To win military glory is to share with pestilence and famine the honor of destroying your species, and to participate with Alexander's horse the distinction of transmitting your name to posterity.

"**Doctor**, what do you think is the cause of this frequent rush of blood to my head?" "Oh, it is nothing but an effort of Nature. Nature, you know, *abhors a vacuum*."

Never seek to be entrusted with your friend's secret, for, no matter how faithfully you may keep it, you will be liable in a thousand contingencies to the suspicion of having betrayed it.

The Merchants' Magazine says that the business of the merchants has not been very good during the last year. Certainly a large number of them did "a *smashing business*" a few months ago.

If you are an author don't be proud of the swiftness of your pen. Leave that quality to race horses. The Pegasus that wins the laurels is a rather slow traveler.

The question is often asked why it is that so many dogs have spots over their eyes. Probably nature, in that particular case, stops to dot her eyes.

It would seem that a great many men and women are trying to establish their claims to the possession of genius by proving their deplorable lack of common sense.

As the intellect wastes away, malignity generally increases. So, when the brain decays after death, snakes are said to breed in the vacant skull.

The moral courage that will face obloquy in a good cause, is a much rarer gift than the bodily valor that will confront death in a bad one.

The sweetest bedfellow is conscience. Ah, it is a charming thing to feel her at one's heart—to hear her evening song and her morning hymn.

We have just seen a wagon-load of sheep and calves pass our window with their feet tied. *Bound* for market, we presume.

Those who write and speak best upon spirituous liquors, are most generally those who are fullest of their subject.

Paradoxical as it may seem, he who reels and staggers most in the journey of life takes the straightest cut to the devil.

The current coin of life is plain, sound sense. We drive a more substantial and thriving trade with that than with aught else.

It is generally supposed that the whale, for three days after swallowing Jonah, had a great deal of *blubber* in him.

Gold is an idol, worshiped in all climates without a single temple, and by all classes without a single hypocrite.

Many a man censures and praises so very faintly that he has no enemies except his friends.

If a journeyman dyer can earn two dollars a day by *dying*, what should it cost him to *live*?

If you wish to be certain of what you get, never marry a girl named Ann; "an" is an indefinite article.

It is singular that when bills are *due*, their acceptors are often *mist*.

To fan treason into full blaze, always fan with a petticoat.

When the wolf turns moralist, always look to your lambs.

CURRENT ITEMS.

By the last news from China we are informed that the Emperor says he will sooner lose his throne than permit any ambassador to approach his august presence without performing the kow-tow. The kow-tow is performed by the person who approaches the imperial presence knocking his head on the ground nine times before the imperial feet. If the Emperor insists too obstinately on this knocking of ambassadors' heads on the ground, the affair may result in his having his own head knocked off his shoulders.

An eastern man being astonished at the number of deaths by drowning in the river at Milwaukie, asked a resident of that city how it happened that so many thus lost their lives, and was informed that it was on account of a municipal ordinance which forbids swimming within the city limits; that the people are such law-abiding citizens, when one of them slips into the river he remembers the ordinance, and, rather than violate it, goes cheerfully to the bottom without a struggle.

Several ladies who were riding on horseback across the upper part of this island, a short time since, proposed to try the speed of their steeds, and giving them the whip, dashed off in a most reckless manner. Some of the ladies soon became frightened and lost the control of their horses, and finally one of them was thrown to the ground with great force and seriously injured. Ladies should be careful how they attempt such feats, when there are no gentlemen along to assist them in case of disaster.

A country youth, some sixteen years of age, living near Eufala, Ala., having heard of snake-charming, became ambitious to excel in that mysterious art, and having secured a good-sized rattlesnake, attempted to fascinate the reptile by his seductions; but the snake soon put an end to the experiment by biting the operator, who, having no antidote, died a few hours afterwards in great agony.

A couple of men named Nash and Guthrie living near Ironton, Ohio, recently had a lawsuit before a Justice of the Peace of that township. Nash came to the Justice's armed with a rifle and bowie knife, and threatened to shoot Guthrie the moment he could get a glimpse of him, whereat Guthrie, who also had a rifle and was concealed in the room, shot Nash dead.

A Chinaman recently stepped into a well-known jewelry store on Broadway, and asked one of the salesmen to show him a few "consistencies." The puzzled clerk asked the Celestial to explain, whereat he said he didn't know how to explain, but since he had been in this country he had often heard that *consistency* is a jewel, and he therefore thought that jewelers' shops were the places to find 'em!

The Mr. Bowyer who, a short time ago, killed James McDowell, the President of the Fincastle (Va.) Bank, for inveigling his daughter from home, and leaving her with disreputable people in Baltimore, was recently acquitted of the chrage of murder, on the ground that the killing of McDowell was, under the circumstances, a justifiable act.

A statistician estimates that the population of New York City proper in 1860 will be seven hundred and sixty-four thousand, which number the population of the suburbs will swell to one million one hundred and forty thousand.

Recent publications, from official sources, in England, show that only one person in ten in that country lives to the age of seventy-five years. In this country, one person in seven reaches that age.

A New Orleans paper says that over ten thousand persons have been attacked with the yellow fever in that city this season, seven thousand of whom "passed safely through the terrible ordeal of acclimation."

A washerwoman in this city, who had been in the habit of washing *the* shirt of a poor attorney, recently charged him for it by the dozen, on the ground that it was in twelve pieces.

A balloonist in Troy (N. Y.) has announced his intention of building a mammoth balloon during the coming winter, in which he proposes to cross the Atlantic next spring.

The expenses of the "late Mormon War," as it is called, will, it is thought, amount to over nine millions of dollars.

No less than three cases of wife-murder in this city, were reported one morning recently

THE RESTORED WANDERER.

BY MRS. L. H. SIGOURNEY.

"A sheep wandered from the fold. She refused to return. The shepherd took her lamb. Then she followed him."
FROM THE GERMAN.

I was a straying sheep,
I wandered from my guide,
Along the broad and flowery road,
My lambkin by my side.

A warning call I heard—
"Come back to me!" it said;
I knew it was the Shepherd's voice,
Yet turn'd away my head.

Among the giddy throng,
I sported far and wide,
By the green margin of the brooks,
My lambkin at my side.

But clouds obscured the sky,
I stood alone that day;
I knew it was the Shepherd's hand
That took my lamb away.

He took it to His fold,
My eyes with tears were dim;
Then, through the darkness and the storm
I rose and followed Him.

The steep and narrow way,
With humbled heart I took;
I knew it was the path He went,
The path that I forsook.

So, still I'll climb and pray,
Till this short life is o'er,
And try to find my folded lamb,
And never wander more.

Hartford, Sept. 10th, 1858.

RICHARD HOFFMAN.

A TALE OF LOVE AND RETRIBUTION.

CHAPTER XC.

AN INIQUITOUS COMPACT.

The death of the drug-vendor and Tom Styles, although it removed the worst apprehensions from the mind of the murderer, did not relieve them all. To do that, money was necessary; and money was not to be had. His credit, which had hitherto been sustained only by the most questionable means, was exhausted: ruin still stared him in the face. An accident, an inquiry at any moment might blast the reputation of the unprincipled speculator, and consign him to a prison. He had more than one reason to fear this, for Peter Mangles had returned to town, and he felt that the eye of the old clerk was fixed upon his movements.

Had Carus possessed the means of establishing himself in another land, he would at once have fled from England; but reckless, wild, unprincipled speculation—that desperate, fascinating game which, like the mirage of the desert, deludes its victims with unreal visions—had long since exhausted the moderate fortune he once possessed; and his were not the energies to look life and its stern realities in the face—battle with them resolutely, and overcome them by the force of indomitable will. On the contrary, he was one of those heartless wretches whom poverty enervates more hopelessly than before.

Doubtless our readers have not forgotten that Carus had both a wife and child; the latter a meek-spirited, nervous boy, who trembled at the very sound of his father's voice, and shrank from his presence with ill-disguised terror.

To protect the interests of her son, Mrs. Kearn had hitherto firmly refused to give up that portion of her property settled upon herself at the time of her ill-assorted marriage. Her husband had tried threats and kindness without being able to shake her resolution: to both she opposed the same passive resistance, and met his menaces of separating her from her son with hints of an appeal to the Chancellor for protection. This staggered the ruffian, and the subject had been permitted to drop between them, till present emergencies revived it in his mind.

Before putting his scheme in execution he resolved, however, to make one last attempt to shake her resolution, for which purpose he sought the dressing-room of his unhappy victim, whom he found seated near the window, hearing the boy his lessons.

Mrs. Kearn changed color at his appearance, for she read in the scowling glance of her persecutor, and his strongly compressed under lip, a repetition of the same angry scenes that had so frequently passed between them.

"Leave the room, Horace," he exclaimed, harshly addressing the youth, who looked anxiously in the pale face of his mother, and hesitated to obey him.

"Does the idiot hear!" added the ruffian, trying to work himself into a rage, in order to give color to the violence he meditated.

"Obey your father, my love," said the unhappy woman, placing herself, with maternal instinct, between them, to prevent the insulting word from being followed by a blow, "and take your books with you."

The boy obeyed, and reluctantly quitted the dressing-room; for he loved his mother, and dreaded the trial which bitter experience told him was about to follow.

For several minutes Carus kept muttering to himself indistinct observations touching the obstinacy of wives, and the folly of entrusting them with the education of children. Mrs. Kearn heard these observations in silence, fearful lest a word should add to his ill-humor.

Suddenly he paused, and, fixing his eyes upon her, asked her why she refused to answer him.

"What can I say?" replied the meek-spirited creature, "when every word will be construed into an offense."

"What can you say!" repeated the tyrant. "What should a wife say when her husband is in difficulties—harrassed by demands which she has it in her power to satisfy?"

"Still that same eternal subject!" sighed the victim; "money—money!"

"I must have it!" exclaimed Carus, approaching her, and seizing her rudely by the arm; "I will have it. Your selfish obstinacy has baffled me in my speculations—prevented me from retrieving my shattered fortunes. Mark me," he added; "I will have it, or——"

The rest of the threat remained unspoken.

"Pause before you decide," he resumed, after a pause. "You may be the mistress of your property, but I am guardian of my son."

His wife turned pale as death. There was a frightful earnestness in every word he uttered, and a savage determination in his deep-sunken eyes as they flashed terribly upon her.

"You would take him from me!" she faltered.

"You have said it, madam; and, by heavens, I will. He has been too long petted and indulged by your weakness—taught to hate and despise me."

"You wrong me, Carus!" exclaimed Mrs. Kearn, imploringly. "Deeply as I have suffered from your unkindness and neglect, never has a word of complaint passed my lips in presence of my child. It is not my fault," she added, "if he no longer respects his father."

"Indeed!" said the fellow, with a sneer; "doubtless you expect to find me grateful, exceedingly grateful, for your forbearance. Will you assist me in my emergency?" he continued. "I shall not require the money for any lengthened period. I have certain operations in hand which once brought to a successful issue will retrieve all that I have lost."

His hearer regarded him with a look which reminded him how often she had heard and yielded to that plea before.

"I cannot beggar my child," she answered, with an effort to appear calm; "he has been wronged deeply enough already."

"You have seen him, then, for the last time," exclaimed her husband, advancing towards the room into which Horace had retired.

The wretched mother threw herself between him and the door.

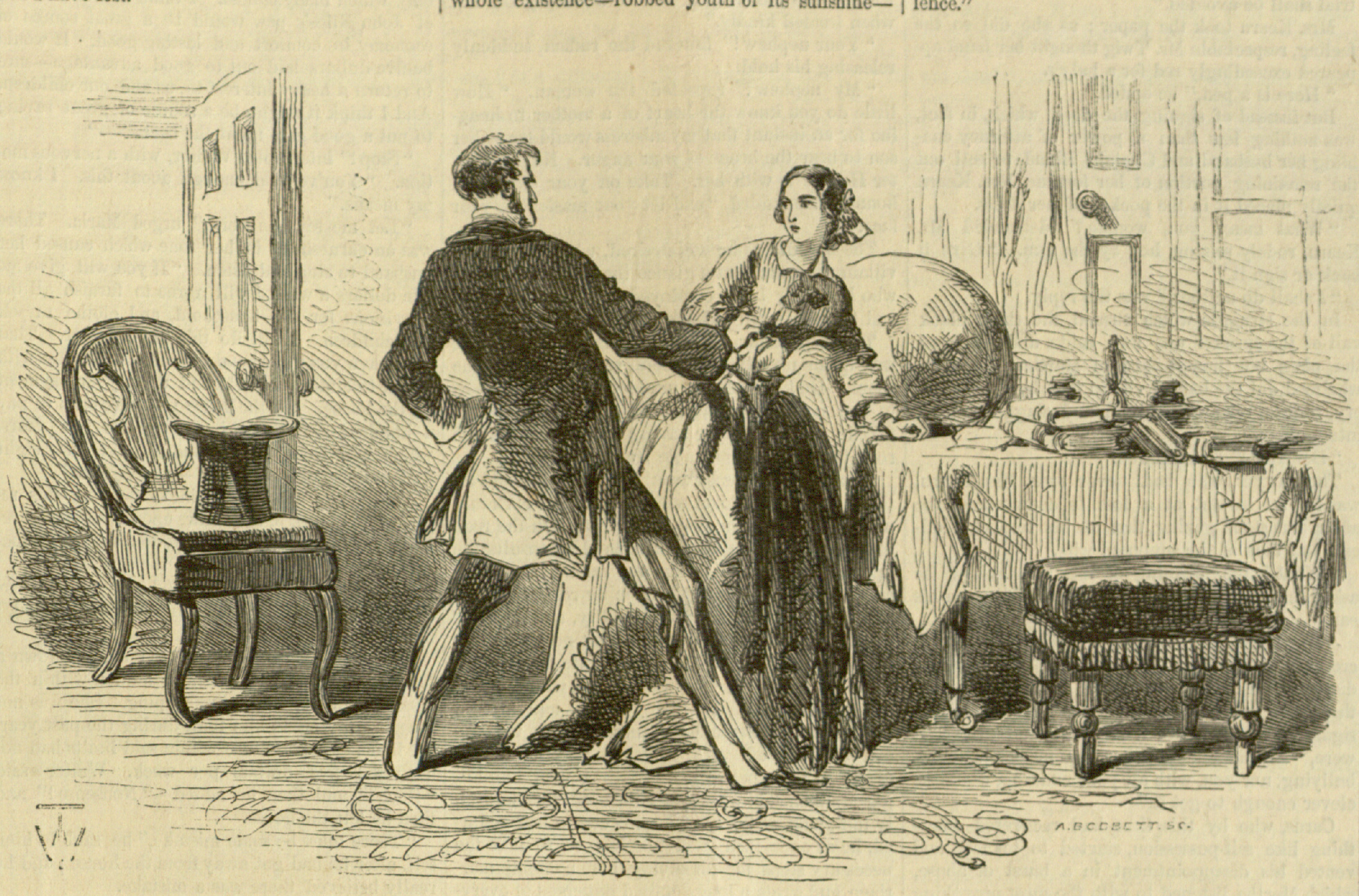
"Have mercy, Carus," she shrieked, "upon me and on yourself. Have you not blighted my whole existence—robbed youth of its sunshine—womanhood of its respect? I have but one consolation left; if you have a heart, do not seek to deprive me of it."

The loud insulting laugh which followed her appeal showed how callous was the nature to which it had been addressed.

"You will not," she added, frantically, as her husband endeavored to unloose her grasp from the handle of the door; "mercy! mercy!"

With a violent effort, the ruffian succeeded in wrenching it from her hand.

"You dare not," she exclaimed, starting to her feet; "the law will protect him from your violence."


A. BOBBETT. SC.

THE RUINED SPECULATOR'S LAST CARD.

"It must find him first," replied her husband, with a sneer.

"Stay one moment! Will nothing less than our ruin, our absolute beggary content you?"

At this question, which indicated a yielding, as he imagined, on the part of the speaker, Carus, who was about to quit the room, retraced his steps.

"There is risk," he said, "neither of beggary nor ruin; but a crisis has arrived which renders additional capital absolutely necessary to carry my operations to a successful issue: were you capable of entering into the details, or of comprehending them in all their bearings, I could prove this to you. If you doubt me, consult Bland upon the subject."

"Yes, yes!" sobbed Mrs. Kearn, happy to obtain a respite upon any terms; "he is a friend."

Had she caught the ironical smile which rested for an instant on the saturnine features of her husband, she might have read the value of the reed on which she leant.

"Will you see him?" he exclaimed.

A feeble "Yes" indicated how completely the victim of domestic tyranny was exhausted by the struggle she had undergone.

"And when shall I have your answer, madam?"

"In the morning."

"Be it so," replied her persecutor, after a few moments' reflection; "but remember that it must be final."

With which observation he quitted the room, leaving his heart and spirit-crushed wife a prey to agonizing doubts and indecision.

No sooner was she alone than the door of the adjoining chamber opened, and her son—his pale cheek suffused with tears—ran towards her, and threw his arms around her neck; he was followed by a female, about thirty years of age, a respectable, intelligent looking woman, who regarded her with the deepest commiseration.

It was her faithful servant, Martha.

The presence of her boy, his tears and fond caress, recalled the suffering mother to herself.

"Let father have the money," he whispered, "when I am old enough I will work for both."

"Yes, yes!" sobbed Mrs. Kearn, clasping him to her heart; "anything rather than part with you! but it is hard—very hard—that my hand should be the one to beggar you?"

"You must do nothing of the kind," observed Martha, quietly; "the laws will afford you protection, if you only have the courage to resist."

"The laws," repeated her mistress, bitterly, "with their cold delay, will recognize the mother's rights when her heart is broken, and her child torn from her; had I been the only one to suffer, I could have endured the worst, rather than resign the last remnant of my fortune to his rapacious grasp."

"You will yield, then," observed the woman, in a tone of disappointment.

"I must see Bland," was the reply; "he will advise me."

At the name of the captain, a shade of doubt and contempt crossed the features of the servant; she, at least, had no faith in his friendship or disinterestedness.

And she was right. Captain Bland was one of those convenient personages; and there are many such in the world, who are always ready to perform any amount of dirty work, provided they are well paid. Carus had long found him an exceedingly useful assistant, most of his numerous speculations having been conducted through his agency; for, as our readers are aware, he was prohibited by the deed of partnership between himself and Mr. Bently from trading on his own account.

When his employer first introduced him to his unhappy wife it was with a design which we cannot pollute our pages by more than a passing allusion to. That design had failed. The unprincipled agent perceived, before compromising himself too far, that the purity and virtue of Mrs. Kearn were not to be corrupted by his sophistry—affected sympathy with her wrongs, or well-acted interest for her boy.

They had, however, produced some effect: the grateful mother believed implicitly in his professions of friendship. Had she known his real character, she would have turned from him with loathing and contempt.

"And you will trust this man?" said Martha.

"I must."

"It is more than I would do," observed the clearsighted woman. "But, heaven help us, we are placed in an evil strait. Why not apply at once to your husband's uncle, Mr. Bently? *He* is an honorable man."

"Alas! he is ill—dying, I believe," sighed her mistress—"at Meldown; and I have no friend, no brother to advise me. It is useless to struggle: death has deprived me of every natural protector."

"Except one," replied the servant: "Edgar Marston."

A slight blush suffused the cheek of her mistress. The gentleman alluded to was her cousin—a clergyman living in Norfolk, who had once been a suitor for her hand; but, in an evil hour for herself, she, or rather her fortune, attracted the attention of Carus. The authority of her father, and not her own heart, had decided the choice.

"He is married now," added the speaker, who read all that was passing in her mind; "and there can be nothing wrong in seeking his assistance."

"I will reflect upon it," replied the unhappy woman, passing her hand athwart her brow, as if to collect her thought. "Leave me now," she added; "Horace will remain with me. I cannot bear him from my sight for a single moment."

Her friend, for she was a faithful though humble one, quitted the room, her heart filled with sorrow and womanly indignation at the sufferings of her mistress, and the brutal conduct of her master, upon whose proceedings she resolved to keep an eye, as well as those of his plausible friend, who called shortly afterwards and had a long interview with her mistress.

Martha heard every word that passed between them, and took her precautions accordingly.

Carus had been waiting several hours at the chambers of his confederate, eager to learn the result of his scheme of villainy. Never had time dragged so heavily. Ruin and exposure stared him in the face, and without money, he felt himself tied, bear-like, to the stake, but without courage to fight it out. At every step he heard upon the stairs, the conscience-stricken culprit started and hastened impatiently to the door. Each disappointment added to the bitterness of his position. For once tedious time gave him leisure to reflect, and reflection formed no slight part of his punishment.

"At last!" he exclaimed, as his agent made his appearance. "Well, have you succeeded?"

"Partially," was the reply.

"Explain yourself, anything is better than the torments of suspense; they eat into my very heart, and change my blood to gall."

"I have seen your wife."

"Well, well!"

"Hang it, man," said the captain, "allow me to tell my tale in my own way; this interruption only adds to the suspense you complain of."

Carus compressed his lips with dogged resolution, and listened to what followed in sullen silence.

"The confidence of Mrs. Kearn," continued the speaker, "appears to be unabated in me. She still believes me to be her disinterested adviser and sincere friend; but let that pass. Like most women, when greatly agitated, I found her irresolute and vacillating—at one moment ready to resign everything rather than part with her son, the next resolved to defend her rights, and resist a separation by legal means."

"Did you urge that I only required the money for a time?" demanded his hearer.

"It would have been unwise, and destroyed the confidence she still reposes in me," was the reply of the keen-judging man of the world. "She has listened to that argument too frequently before. Not to keep you any longer in suspense," he added, "she finally decided upon one of two alternatives."

"Name them."

"The first was to make the transfer you demand."

The dark eyes of Carus flashed triumphantly.

"I have succeeded, then?" he exclaimed.

"Not yet," observed the captain; "I told you one of two alternatives, for your wife will never consent, under any circumstances, to part with her boy."

"Go on."

"*The other is to fly with me.*"

"Fly!" repeated the worthless husband, with such unfeigned astonishment that it provoked a smile from his dear friend; "I thought you had long since abandoned that project."

"She herself proposed it."

"Impossible! you are trifling with me."

"But not in the sense you mean. I am to escort her into Norfolk to the residence of her cousin, Edgar Marston, should she decide on placing herself and Horace under his protection."

"The traitress!" muttered Carus; "but it will answer my purpose—place her completely in my power and justify my conduct to the world. Instead of conducting her towards her cousin's, you must take the route to Dover. Do you comprehend my plans?"

The captain nodded intelligently.

"I will overtake you upon the road, as a matter of course, a violent altercation must ensue between us; to escape the brand of shame, for she is as proud of her good name, as fond of the idiot who calls her mother, she will consent to any sacrifice."

"That certainly will be the surest way," observed Bland, without the slightest touch of remorse at the unmanly, contemptible part he was about to act.

"And how are we to learn her decision?" inquired the husband.

"Martha is to inform me of it," replied his confederate; "for I pretended that it would be unsafe to write."

At the name of the faithful servant, a shade of doubt and dissatisfaction passed over the countenance of Carus Kearn. He had much rather that it had been by any other messenger.

For some time longer the guilty man was left a prey to doubt. Nearly an hour elapsed before a ring was heard.

"There's Martha," whispered Bland; "you had better not be seen by her."

His visitor took the hint, and, catching up his hat, retired into the inner room; no sooner had he disappeared, than his friend admitted the messenger.

"Oh, captain!" exclaimed the woman, sinking, rather than seating herself, into a chair, "pray fasten the door; should my master chance to call."

"A most unlikely circumstance," observed the gentleman; "it is days since I have seen him. To speak candidly, there is a coolness between us. His conduct towards so excellent a wife, has materially shaken the friendship I once felt for him."

Martha drew down the corners of her mouth in order to repress a smile. The porter had informed her, in answer to her inquiries, that Mr. Kearn had been with the captain for the last two hours. She doubted not but he was still within hearing.

"It is a sad business," observed the hypocrite, with a sigh; "but some men throw away their happiness, and only repent the loss of it when too late."

"That is very true, sir; and my master is one of them. He is a bad man."

"I fear it."

"I know it," continued the messenger. "I am sure I do not know what would become of my poor mistress, but for your kindness and friendship. She has every reliance upon you."

Captain Bland tried to throw an expression of sympathy into his face; and, although burning with impatience to learn the result of his iniquitous scheme, he forbore to ask any questions, but wait till Martha should inform him of it.

"Well, sir," said the latter, "Mrs. Kearn has decided upon taking your advice and seeking the protection of her cousin; she has sent me for instructions."

"Is her mind fully made up?"

"Fully," answered his visitor; "and high time it was, with such a wretch for a husband. He has no more heart than a stone, his word is a lie, and he would rob his wife and child with as little pity or remorse as a fox would plunder a hen-roost."

The belief that Carus was still within hearing, and listening to every word she uttered, added to the bitterness with which the honest creature poured forth her invectives.

The captain could scarcely refrain from a smile.

"Then, he is such a sneak," she added. "If he had the courage of a man, or the heart of a father, he would never descend to threaten his wife with the loss of her child."

"It is, indeed, a heartless cruelty."

"Cruelty!" repeated Martha; "I should think it was a cruelty. My poor mistress is spirit-crushed. I had the greatest difficulty in the world to bring her to a decision. Had it been my case," she added, "it would not have cost me a minute's consideration to make up my mind."

"Doubtless not," mentally observed the gentleman.

"I wish I had been his wife, that's all!—he should never have broken my heart. But that is not to the point; my mistress will be ready to accompany you this evening. You must have a chaise at the end of the square."

"Certainly; at what hour?"

"Not later than ten, or before eight," replied the messenger; "her husband will be at his club."

"It shall be arranged as your mistress desires," said the captain, greatly delighted at the information.

"But that is not all."

"What next?"

"Master Horace will accompany her. Poor thing! she cannot part with him for an instant."

"It is not necessary that she should," observed the captain, with difficulty suppressing his satisfaction. "I can understand a mother's feelings, and respect them."

"I am sure you can sir; I told my mistress so; but, to prevent all suspicion—for she is closely watched, every servant in the house, except myself, being a spy upon her—the poor dear boy will be disguised."

"In what way?"

"As a girl, sir."

"Cleverly arranged," exclaimed the hypocrite. "Ah, Martha, I can discern your presence of mind in this."

"I'll not say but you may, sir," answered the messenger, with an air of satisfaction. "Have you any message to Mrs. Kearn?"

"Only that I shall be at the place of rendezvous punctually," replied the confederate of Carus, "and that everything shall be arranged as she desires."

"Thank you, sir."

"Do you accompany us?"

"At first it was settled that I should," said Martha, "but my mistress thought better of it, and I remain in order to prevent suspicion, and answer her brute of a husband in the event of his return before you are too far upon the road to be overtaken."

"An excellent precaution," observed Bland; "with such an ally there is little doubt of success."

The woman took her leave, and Carus emerged from his concealment, his face flushed with the anticipation of triumphing over the wife he had so cruelly plundered and oppressed.

"Excellent!" he exclaimed. "The idiot will fall into her own snare; this will place her completely at my mercy. By heavens!" he continued, "the sight of her humiliation, when she finds her reputation blasted by her own imprudence, will afford me as much satisfaction as the surrender of her gold. She has frequently stung me by her quiet, calm contempt, more bitterly than reproaches could have done."

"Nonsense," observed his friend; "it is money, and not revenge upon a helpless woman, who, after all, has never wronged you, that *we* require. By-the-by," he added, "what is to be my share of the profits in the transaction?"

"Oh, we shall not quarrel about that."

"*Of course not*; but to avoid doing so, had we not better come to some understanding on the point at once?"

"What mean you?"

"You know the old adage."

"What adage?"

"That short reckonings make long friends," replied Captain Bland, carelessly lighting a cigar.

There was little in the words, but a great deal implied in the tone in which they were uttered, and Carus Kearn reflected for a few instants before he could govern his rage sufficiently to reply to them.

"I have no cash by me," he said.

"I know that, old fellow," answered his amiable confederate, "and I am prepared to advance the necessary funds for our joint speculation, but you must give me a memorandum."

"An I O U?"

"A peculiar one."

"As you please; draw it out yourself."

"Your wife must do that," was the reply.

"My wife!" repeated the ruffian.

"Yes, the transfer of the securities must be made in our joint names; you understand me?"

"Villain!" exclaimed Carus.

"Which do you mean?" answered his hitherto obsequious captain, coolly; "there are two of us. Do you imagine, Mr. Kearn, that I am such a fool as to risk my money and reputation on no better security than your word? You forget how long I have known its exact value."

"You insult me!"

"No, I only reason with you. It is time we understood each other. You will find me more easy to deal with than you expect. Many men in my position would expect half the profits of the adventure; now I will be satisfied with a fourth."

"Moderate, indeed! Just two thousand five hundred pounds!" ejaculated Carus, in an ironical tone.

"Calculated to a fraction," was the cool reply. "I give you ten minutes to decide."

Before the time had elapsed, Carus had yielded the point, and the iniquitous compact was concluded.

CHAPTER XCI.

A VILLANOUS TRIO OUTWITTED.

It was night, and the cold pitiless rain fell with that provoking, steady perseverance which renders all chance of its leaving off hopeless, for some time to come. There were but few persons on foot, except the policeman on his weary beat, and the houseless, hungry, and wretched, who hurried along with a sort of restless, make-believe haste, as if they had a home, warm fire, and supper waiting their return.

Occasionally, these solitary pariahs would suddenly pause, cast a wistful eye towards the windows of some respectable-looking house, contemplate the light visible through the closely-drawn curtains, and then hurry on, envious, perhaps, of the comforts of those within, or sighing at the recollection of the time when they too sat in well-lit rooms and saw kind faces smiling round them.

We have often thought that the waking dreams of the night walkers of London would form an interesting volume—memories that have lost their sunshine, jostling against self-reproaches and regrets—always regrets,—it is the history of life, its story and its end.

At the corner of one of those squares, which, like the mediatised princes of Germany, hold an equivocal rank somewhere between fashion and respectability, a chaise and four had been waiting nearly a couple of hours, to the intense disgust of the postboys, two antiquated specimens of an all but extinct race. The rain came splashing down upon their faded jackets and leathern continuations in large, heavy drops, which had already nearly wetted them through, and they looked about as wretched and uncomfortable as the statue of George the Fourth, in his slippers and well-curled wig, at Charing-cross, and only a little less ridiculous.

In the vehicle sat Captain Bland, calm, watchful, as self-possessed as a spider in its web waiting for the prey, which he felt assured must eventually fall into its meshes.

"At last!" he muttered to himself, as a lady, elegantly dressed and deeply vailed, turned the corner of the square; "the boy is with her."

Any ordinary observer would have said the girl, for such, to all appearance, was the sex of the child who accompanied her.

As the fugitives reached the chaise, the gentleman opened the door, but without descending himself, and assisted them in.

"Be firm, my dear Mrs. Kearn," he whispered, "and all will go well."

A stifled sob was the only reply.

This did not surprise the cold, calculating man of the world. To him the agitation, distress, and terror of the persecuted wife appeared very natural; for however pure and correct her motives, the step she had taken was a dangerous one, and might compromise her reputation, especially, if by any *unforeseen accident*, her worthless husband should overtake her before reaching the residence of the relative to whom she was flying for protection.

The postboys, who had received their orders, started at a rapid pace, mentally calculating, no doubt, the amount of additional gratuity their employer had promised them.

Finding that his dupe did not feel disposed to enter into conversation, but replied either by monosyllables or stifled sighs to his remarks, Captain Bland threw himself back in the vehicle, and began indulging in a train of meditations, in which the past and future were blended.

We ought to begin by premising that he was one of those men who are imbued with a profound contempt for their fellow-creatures; virtue he regarded as a myth—honesty merely a question of degree, holding with the poet,

> "That the stern virtue which disdains a dukedom—
> A sceptre shown, will bow and take the offer."

He had been born poor, and money was his idol—the only deity he ever worshiped.

No wonder, with such feelings and principles, that he had really become the agent of Carus in his rash and ill-considered speculations—speculations, *par parenthese*, by which he alone had profited, seeing that they had left his employer a beggar.

Although Captain Bland knew but little of the antecedents of the man with whom he had thus linked himself, he knew quite enough of the world to feel convinced that they were both dark and dangerous; he had seen him, on more than one occasion, have recourse to means of a most questionable character to maintain his credit in the commercial world; and he naturally began to consider whether it would not be prudent to dissolve the connection—especially as the affair he found himself at present engaged in, if brought to a successful issue, which he no longer doubted, would leave him independent; and, finally, he came to the conclusion that it would.

The question was now to accomplish it with safety to himself; for, like most men of his caste, he had a great respect for his own personal security.

Whilst these reflections were passing through his prolific brain, the chaise continued at a rapid pace to dash along the Dover road. It was into Norfolk that he ought to have conducted his victims; and more than once the hypocrite congratulated himself on the profound sorrow and agitation which prevented Mrs. Kearn from observing the route they were going.

"She must be blind, indeed," he thought, as the vehicle rolled over Blackheath, "if she does not find it out now."

But the lady did not find it out. She still continued with her arms round the neck of her child, absorbed, to all appearance, in her meditations.

Still the rain continued to fall perseveringly and pitiless as the heart of the man who, under the specious garb of friendship, was acting so treacherous a part.

At last the panting steeds drew up at the old post-house just beyond Shooter's-hill; the ostler's bell rang, and in the bustle and confusion which followed Mrs. Kearn did not hear the order of "four fresh horses for Dover."

The captain did, and wondered at her stupidity.

"You had better alight," he whispered; "only for a few minutes. We are beyond the danger of pursuit now."

Apparently the lady thought so too, for she descended without the slightest objection, and, holding her son by the hand, followed him into a private sitting-room, where a cheerful fire was burning.

"One glass of wine," said her supposed protector; "it will strengthen you for the rest of the journey."

Without waiting for a reply he rang the bell *twice*.

It was answered—not by the waiter, but by Carus, who, accompanied by his lawyer—one of those needy, unprincipled rascals who are ever ready to lend the aid of their profession to any piece of rascality, provided they are well paid.

At the sight of her husband, Mrs. Kearn uttered a faint shriek, and, with a mother's instinct, clasped her boy to her bosom, as if that feeble shield could protect him.

There was something devilish in the sneer of triumph which appeared upon the flushed countenance of Carus as he contemplated the woman whose existence he had made wretched—whose firmness in clinging to the wreck of fortune for her child's sake had been proof against threats, entreaties, and persuasions.

"Villain!" he exclaimed, addressing his confederate in a tone of well-acted indignation; "is this your friendship?"

"Hear me," said the captain; "you are deceived."

"You are mistaken; I am no longer deceived," replied the former, continuing the character of an injured husband. "I have long suspected your attempts upon the honor of the abandoned woman who has forgot alike her duty as a mother and a wife."

A suppressed cry, which the lawyer thought sounded very like a chuckle, broke from the lady.

"Captain Bland had better retire," he observed, "his continued presence is an outrage, which would justify my deeply-injured client in proceeding to almost an extremity."

A glance of mutual intelligence was rapidly exchanged by the three confederates, for the speaker was perfectly aware of the excellent understanding which existed between Mr. Kearn and the supposed destroyer of his domestic happiness, who, taking the hint, slunk out of the room.

"This is the virtue whose patient suffering was a living reproof to me," observed Carus, with a bitter sneer, as he contemplated the apparently crushed and broken creature, whose convulsive agitation increased. "But I will not reproach you," he added; "guilt like yours is insensible to shame. By your conduct you have deprived yourself, madam, of all right to my consideration; and Horace must return to town with me. You can remain here, if you think proper."

To his great astonishment, the threat of separating his wife from his son failed to elicit any other reply than a repetition of the sobs, which the lawyer considered sounded exceedingly like a giggle.

Mr. Twig, the name of the practitioner, now thought it time to interfere and play his part.

"This is a painful circumstance—a very painful one; for although no actual guilt may have been committed, it places you, madam, in the eyes of the world, and what is of far more consequence, in those of the law, in an equivocal position, and must entitle my deeply injured client to a divorce, unless," he added, "*some arrangement can be hit upon.*"

He paused for an instant, fully expecting that Mrs. Kearn herself would suggest an alternative, which, even with his effrontery, he hesitated to explain more explicitly.

"It is useless," exclaimed Carus, with an oath. "I appreciate your well-meant interference—but no, the time for mercy is past; infamy, shame, exposure and disgrace, are the just punishment of a life of deception and hypocrisy."

"Be persuaded," said the lawyer, soothingly. "Madam," he continued, bowing to the lady, "this is one of those peculiar cases in which it is the duty of an honest man to act as a friend to both parties. Sign this paper, leave the rest to me, I pledge myself that the scandal of a public trial shall be avoided."

Mrs. Kearn took the paper; as she did so, the feeling, respectable Mr. Twig thought her hand appeared exceedingly red for a lady's.

"Here is a pen," he added.

But instead of signing the deed, which, in fact, was nothing less than a power of attorney enabling her husband and Captain Bland to sell out the remaining portion of her fortune, Mrs. Kearn quietly placed it in the pocket of her dress.

"What mean you, woman?" demanded Mr. Kearn, rudely seizing her by the arm. "Give it back or sign it."

"I shall do neither," was the reply.

In the struggle which ensued, the thick black vail of the speaker was torn aside, and disclosed the plain but honest face of Martha. So overwhelmed did the baffled villain feel by the discovery, that he released his hold and staggered back into a chair.

"Defeated!" he muttered.

The lawyer, who had never seen Mrs. Kearn, was for an instant at a loss to comprehend the affair, but stood gazing, first at his respected client, and then at the supposed wife.

"What is the meaning of this sad levity?" he asked, as a hearty laugh from Martha fell upon his ear.

"It means, Mr. Lawyer," replied the honest creature, "that the villains who employed you are disappointed; that, instead of a runaway wife, they have only caught a runaway servant, whose signature is not worth a sixpence, and even if it were," she added, "neither my master, with his bullying, nor you, with all your cunning, would be clever enough to get it."

Carus, who by this time had recovered something like self-possession, started to his feet, and vented his disappointment in a burst of abuse, which Martha listened to with the most provoking coolness.

"Where is your mistress?" he demanded, menacingly; "answer me, or I will wring the answer from your treacherous heart."

The female rang the bell violently. It was answered by the innkeeper and several waiters.

"Landlord," she said, "if you would not have a murder committed in your house, you had better remain in the room. I do not feel that my life is safe with these men."

"Certainly," answered the host. "I would not have such an unpleasant occurrence in my house for all the world. Who is this lady, sir?" he added, addressing himself to Carus.

"Lady!" repeated the latter, impatiently; "she is my wife's waiting-maid."

On hearing this, the landlord at once comprehended the affair, and broke out into a hearty laugh.

"Leave the room!" exclaimed the lawyer.

"After what has been stated, I shall do nothing of the kind," replied the hotel-keeper. "I consider myself responsible for this young woman's safety. I can permit no violence in my house; if you attempt it, I shall call for assistance."

By this time several of the female servants, who had heard that an elopement had taken place, and had, with a pardonable curiosity, been listening at the door, set up a loud cry, and, glad of an excuse for making their appearance, rushed into the room, followed by the waiter and the two post-boys.

Martha felt herself perfectly re-assured by their presence.

The lawyer whispered a few words in the ear of his client to recommend patience, adding that any further display of anger, under the circumstances, would simply appear ridiculous.

Carus gnashed his teeth with impotent rage, and again demanded of the woman what had become of her mistress.

"Well," answered the waiting-maid, "as there can be no harm in telling you, I may as well gratify your curiosity. By this time she is more than half way upon her journey into Norfolk, to place herself under the protection of her cousin, the Reverend Edgar Marston, and his wife. You thought yourself exceedingly cunning," she added, "when you directed the spies you had placed round her to wink at her departure. Your scheme was well planned, but mine has been better executed."

"She is gone, then?"

"Of course she is."

"And alone?"

"Alone," replied Martha. "There are not two Captain Blands in the world."

The last-named personage now made his appearance, pale with rage and mortification. It would have been difficult to decide which he felt the most—the loss of his share in the intended plunder, or the disgrace, as he considered it, of being outwitted.

"Ah, there he is!" continued the speaker, with a satirical smile. "I am sure I ought to feel exceedingly obliged for the expense he has been at on my account, and the care he has taken of me. It is not often that a gentleman gives himself so much trouble for a poor servant."

A titter from all but the lawyer and the two confederates followed the observation.

"You must give up that paper," said the former, anxious to obtain possession of the unsigned procuration.

"I shall do nothing of the kind," replied the honest creature; "it may be useful to my dear mistress, and prove the conspiracy to rob her of all that remains of her once large fortune."

Carus would have forced it from her, but the landlord again interfered, and declared that no violence could be permitted in his establishment; he already began to see clearly through the affair—the husband had played a most dishonest game and lost it.

"Your son," observed Captain Bland, "is undoubtedly under the guardianship of his father." His companion in crime took the hint, and declared his intention of carrying him back to town.

"Boy!" repeated the waiters and servants; "why it is a girl."

"A disguised one," said the lawyer; "and I warn you of the consequences of opposing the lawful authority of his parent."

The youth—for it really was a boy—evinced no disposition to quit the side of Martha.

"We are both certain," observed the captain, "that this gentleman is his father, and will assist him to maintain his right to the possession of the person of his son."

"Let me see who will venture to dispute it," exclaimed Carus, savagely, at the same time placing his heavy grasp upon the shoulders of the youth, and attempting to drag him from the side of the woman, who, strange to say, did not appear in the slightest degree alarmed or uneasy at these threats.

To the astonishment of the unnatural father, the boy, who had always obeyed his slightest word with fear and trembling—so great was the terror he entertained of him—resisted the attempt to remove him from the side of Martha; and when Carus, stung to fury by the obstinacy of the idiot, as he termed him, gave vent to his passion in a blow, returned the compliment by a violent attack upon his shins.

Martha laughed heartily

"You had better let my nephew alone, Mr Kearn," she observed; "he is a very good lad when treated kindly."

"Your nephew!" faltered the ruffian, suddenly releasing his hold.

"My nephew!" repeated the woman. "How little do you know the heart of a mother to imagine for an instant that my mistress would leave her son to bear the brunt of your anger. No, no, Master Horace is with her. Take off your curls and bonnet," she added, "and let your master see your face."

The boy did as he was desired, when the baffled villain recognized at a glance the features of a lad who had long been employed in his own stables; and found himself thwarted every way.

The respectable Mr. Twig, seeing that the game was quite up with his client, sneaked out of the room. He had certain unpleasant misgivings as to the possible consequences of the part he had taken; many a lawyer having been struck off the rolls for a less questionable transaction.

Captain Bland and Carus followed him, and all three returned to town, sadder but most certainly not better men than they quitted it. On the road something like an attempt to hold a consultation upon the position of affairs was made. But it became so interrupted and broken by recriminations and mutual reproaches of stupidity, and want of forethought and arrangement, that no conclusion could be arrived at till it was too late for action.

Meanwhile the deeply-injured wife, with her persecuted son, continued her journey, and arrived in safety at the rectory of her relative, who received them both with generous hospitality, and promised them protection. With a man like Edgar Marston this was not a vain word, for, naturally indignant at the cruelties his cousin had endured, he at once instructed his lawyer to take the necessary steps for dissolving her unhappy marriage, and wrote a long detailed statement of everything that had transpired to Mr. Bently.

The day after the arrival of Mrs. Kearn and her son, they were joined at the rectory by the faithful Martha, who brought the unsigned procuration with her. Although but little acquainted with law or its technicalities, something told her that it might ultimately prove of consequence to her mistress.

[TO BE CONTINUED IN OUR NEXT.]

"CAN'T AFFORD IT."

A SKETCH FOR EVERY-DAY LIFE.

BY SYLVANUS COBB, JR.

"Can't afford it, Maria."

"But you might if you would only think so, Walter," plead the young wife.

"I can't do it," the husband returned, very emphatically. "It would cost two or three dollars, at the very lowest, to put up such a gate, and the old bars will answer every purpose."

"No, they won't, Walter. The neighbors' children very often leave the bars down, and then stray cattle come into the garden. We may lose more than the price of a gate in one hour, if a cow should happen to get in when I am away."

"I should like to know who leaves the bars down," said Walter, very threateningly. "The same children might leave a gate open."

"But we can have a gate made to close of its own accord, with a weight or a spring," suggested the wife. "John Niles has had a gate put up in his yard."

"But I ain't John Niles, my dear," Walter wished his wife to remember.

"But his family is as large as yours, and his wages are not so high."

"Never mind about that. I tell you I can't afford it.—at any rate, not at present." And with this Walter started off for his work.

Walter Gray was a young man, about thirty; an industrious mechanic; had been married some eight years; and had an interesting family. He meant to provide well for those who depended upon him, and in a measure he did so. But there were many little comforts of which he felt obliged to deprive them,—comforts which at times they really needed, and which, in the end, might have proved a source of saving. And more, too: It might have added to his own happiness had he felt able to grant these little requests. But he couldn't afford it;—at least, so he thought; and whether he thought so with sound judgment the sequel will show.

The gate which his wife had been so anxious to have put up was needed at the entrance to the garden back of the house, where there was only a pair of short bars. The children often came through there, and sometimes left the way open behind them. In short, there were many ways in which those bars were apt to be left down, and Maria Gray had very often to leave her work to drive out cattle that got in. It was only by extreme watchfulness on her part that the garden was preserved. She had spoken several times to her husband about it, but he felt that he couldn't afford it. She must keep her eyes upon the spot, and see that the bars were kept shut.

Only a few days after this Mrs. Gray asked her husband if he was going to hire a pew in the church for the following year, and he told her that he did not think he should.

"But you can hire half of one. We can have half of Mr. Niles's pew for five dollars."

"I can't afford it," was Walter's reply. "I should get no great good from the meetings, any way."

"Don't say so, husband. Suppose everybody should feel like that. You certainly wouldn't wish to live, and bring up your children, where there was no religious influence. And if you reap the benefits of good christian institutions, you certainly ought to feel willing to help support them."

"So I would be willing, if I could afford it; but I can't."

Mrs. Gray looked very serious, and seemed to hesitate, as though there were a subject upon her mind, which she felt delicate about broaching; but it had occupied her thoughts too long, and she determined to let it out.

"Walter," she said, a little tremulously, but still resolutely, "you have ten dollars a week."

"Yes."

"And how much of that does it take to feed us?"

"I don't know, I'm sure. I only know that it takes it all to feed and clothe us and pay up the interest on the house."

"I haven't had a new dress since last Fall; and I was reckoning up yesterday how much we had spent for the children, and I found it to be only fifteen dollars for the last ten months. I have worked over some of cousin John's clothes for Charles, and Lucinda jumps into Mary's dresses as the latter outgrows them."

"That's all very well," replied Walter, a little testily. "I understand my own business, and I know just what I can afford, and what I can't. While I have the payments to make on my house I must economize—*I must economize*," he repeated, very decidedly.

"And I would have you economize," returned the wife; "but do not forget that all is not economy which many call so. I think that to hire half of John Niles's pew would be a great source of economy in comfort and lasting good. It would be five dollars laid out to good advantage—sure to return a heavy interest to us and our children. And I think it might be a source of great saving to put a good gate up at the back——"

"Stop!" interrupted Walter, with a nervous motion. "You've said enough about this. I know my means."

"Let me say one word," urged Maria. There was an earnestness in her tone which caused her husband to stop and listen. "If you will give me five dollars a week I will agree to furnish all the provisions for the household, and clothe myself and children. I will do this for one year. That will leave you three hundred and sixty dollars with which to clothe yourself and make your payment on the house. On the house you have only to pay a hundred dollars, with interest for two years, which will leave you a hundred and forty-eight dollars for your clothes and—*other expenses*."

Walter was upon the point of denying this result of the case, but he saw, upon a moment's reflection, that, from his wife's statement, the deduction was correct, so he denied the statement.

"You cannot furnish the food, and clothe yourself and children, for the sum you have named," he said.

Thereupon Maria sat down and made known a few facts to him that had been hidden within the mysteries of her own housekeeping. She was not long in proving to him that, during the past year, the items of expenditure within said limits had not averaged five dollars per week. Walter said "Pooh!" and then he added—"Nonsense!" and then he left the house.

"There must be some mistake," he said to himself, after he had got away from the house; and he really believed there was a mistake.

"Have a glass of soda, Bill? Come, Tom—have a glass?

"Don't care if I do," said Tom and Bill.

"Have some, Ned?"

And Ned said, yes. So the clerk prepared four glasses of soda, for which Walter Gray paid twenty-five cents.

"Let 's have a game of 'seven-up' for the oysters," said Bill, after the day's work was done.

The game was played, and Walter lost, so he paid a dollar for four oyster suppers—suppers which none of them needed, and which did them more hurt than good.

"Have a cigar, Walter?" asked Tom.

Walter said, yes; and in return he paid for four glasses of ale.

One evening they met, after work, and Ned proposed that they should "toss up" to see who should pay for the chowder.

"Come, John—won't you come in?" he said, addressing John Niles, who stood by.

"No—guess not," was John's reply.

"You'd better. It's only for the chowder—for five, if you come in."

"I can't."

"It's of no use to ask him," spoke Walter, in a rather sarcastic tone. "He don't spend his money in that way."

John's face flushed, and his lips trembled; but he restrained the biting words which were struggling upon his tongue, and turned and left the shop.

"He's a mean fellow," cried Tom, loud enough for Niles to hear.

"Tight as the bark of a tree," added Walter, in a tone equally loud.

John Niles heard the remarks, but he did not come back.

The four remaining men "tossed up," and the lot fell upon Walter and Tom. Then they "tossed it off," and it fell upon Walter, who paid four shillings for the chowder.

Walter started for home about nine o'clock, and on the way he was overtaken by Niles.

"Walter," said the latter, in a kind, but earnest tone, "I want to speak with you. You have wronged me this evening, and I wish you to understand me. For the opinions of Bill Smith and Ned Francis I care not, but I do not wish you to misapprehend me. We live too near together; and I would not loose your good opinion."

"Well—go ahead," returned Walter, who was sensible of the fact that his companion was one of the best and kindest neighbors in the world.

"You said I was mean."

"No, no,—'twas not I who said that."

"Well—you said I was 'tight as the bark of a tree.'"

Walter could not deny this, so John proceeded,—

"I refused to join you in your little game for three reasons, either one of which should have been sufficient to deter me. First: I have resolved not to engage in any such games of hazard. Second: I did not want any chowder. And, third: I could not have afforded to pay for five extra suppers, if the lot had fallen upon me."

"Couldn't have afforded it?" repeated Walter, with a slight tinge of unbelief in his tone.

"No," returned the other. "I could not. I used to be on hand always for any such game, and I thought 'twould be mean to refuse, but I have learned better. Let me tell you how I first came to see the folly of being afraid to spend my money for nothing. Shall I tell you?"

"Certainly," returned Walter, who already began to *see something*.

"Well" pursued Niles, "one noon, as I was going away from home, my wife asked me for a dollar. She wanted it to buy some cloth with. I asked her if she could not get along without it. I had only three dollars with me, and I hated to let one of them go. She said she really needed the cloth, but if I hadn't got the money to spare she could wait. I knew she was disappointed, but I thought she could get along, and I went away. That evening I went into the saloon, and we had a fine social time. It cost me just one dollar and a half. I paid the money willingly—without even a thought of objection—and then I went home. When I entered the hall I heard my wife trying to pacify our oldest child. The little thing had expected a new dress, which had been promised her, and she felt badly because she had not got it.

"'Wait,' urged my wife, as the child sobbed in her disappointment. 'Papa hasn't got the money now; but he'll have some by-and-by, and then you shall have a pretty dress. Poor papa has to work hard.'

"The words smote me to the heart. I could not afford a dollar to dress my little child, but I could afford any amount for the useless entertainment of others! The dollar which my needy wife could not get when she asked for it, I paid away almost twice-told for nothing. But it learned me a lesson. I opened my eyes, and I have kept them open. On the very next morning I afforded my wife the dollar, but I could not afford any more for the beer man. I had not dreamed how much I was wasting, but when I stopped up that leak, and allowed my funds to flow in to their proper channel, I soon found that I could afford every reasonable comfort my wife and children needed. So I stick to the principle which has proved so beneficial to myself and family. Ah—what's that? There's an animal in your garden, Walter."

They had reached the garden fence, and, by the dim starlight, Walter could see a horned beast trampling amongst his sweet corn. The bars had been either left down, or hooked down, and a stray cow had got in. They drove her out, and then Niles went home. Walter saw that the beast had done considerable damage, but he was not angry, for he had something of more importance to think of. He went and sat down beneath an apple tree, and pondered.

"Bless me, if he hasn't put the case down about square!" he said to himself, at the end of some minutes of meditation. "Let me see," he pursued:—"There's sixty-seven cents for chowder—fifty cents for ale—fifty for soda. And that's within the last three days. A dollar and sixty-seven cents. Is it possible! Over a hundred dollars a year! And yet I can't afford two dollars for a gate, nor five dollars that my family may have religious instruction for a year! Walter Gray—*I think you had better turn over a new leaf!*"

And Walter Gray did turn over a new leaf. On the very next day he did two things, thereby astonishing two parties. He had a new gate made for the entrance to the garden, and thereby astonished his wife; and he refused to "toss up" for the ale, and thereby astonished a crowd of expectant thirsty ones. For a month he pursued this course, and by the expiration of that time he could fully appreciate the new blessings that were dawning upon him. He discovered that he could afford everything which the comfort of his family demanded; and in arriving at this result he had only to cut loose those things which he really could not afford. It was a wonder to him how he could have been so foolish. When, at the end of the year, he had paid his note, and had ninety-two dollars left, he felt at first as though there must be some mistake; but when his wife went over their household expenditures with him, and showed him that all they had needed had been bought and paid for, he saw just how it was. He saw that for years he had been wasting his substance, and depriving himself and loved ones of the comforts they needed—not intentionally, but through the strange mistake that leads thousands in the same course. But he did so no more.

Some times, even now, Walter Gray says—"*Can't afford it*," and he says it very emphatically, too. But it is not when his wife or children ask for comfort and joy, nor yet when the needy poor ask for help and charity—for he can well afford all that; but it is when the wild speculation, or the loose companion, asks him to engage in some game of hazard which may rob himself and family of their substance. Then he says—and he repeats it if need be—"CAN'T AFFORD IT!"

A FEW REFLECTIONS.

BY JULIUS HENRY.

There are many conflicting ideas of what is nobleness of character. Some persons suppose that a certain bluster and swagger, a vaunting of one's self, and one's capabilities, that a sort of reckless independence of speech and action, and a rash and thoughtless daring, evince a manly nobility of soul.

But it is not so—all *true* nobleness is closely allied to humility and modesty. The whole soul is, to be sure, independent and brave, but it is so in a seemly way. It scorns to hang for sustenance upon any human support; or to be "forever grafting itself into its parent's old trunk and branches." It is "independent," to be sure, but not for the sake of vanity or spite; on the contrary, it desires independence that it may be at liberty to impart good to others. True nobility respects itself too much not to render fitting respect to all others, especially to age and to woman. It would blush to speak a hasty word to, or a harsh word of, a parent; however much that parent had done to deserve it.

It is a stranger to idleness, and too brave to be discouraged by difficulties. When hedged up in one direction it turns patiently and hopefully in another; and if it cannot sustain itself by means which all the world has agreed to honor, then it takes up a humbler part, and labors *un*honored, save by God, until it is called to go up higher.

It is never known to shrink from duty because the weather proves cold, or hot, or stormy; or because there are long and weary days of labor and self-denial before it. Nobleness does not cry, "There is a lion without; I shall be slain in the streets;" but it says, "I see the way of industry and honesty; it is a narrow way, a hard and steep way, but I am no coward, and no babe; I am strong enough and brave enough to walk that way—yes, and to walk it with a light heart." The *noble-hearted* are not always the *faultless*—far from it; the most glorious victors that this world has known have been those who have been obliged to contend fiercely with their own evil tempers and inclinations. A man is not noble according to what nature did for him at his birth, but according to what he has courage and character to do for himself. And no men are so noble as they are who, against faults of early training, against their own impatience, fretfulness, violence, faint-heartedness, jealousy, selfishness, and thoughtlessness, wage war and come off conqueror, (as every man may who looks unto God for help.)

Such men are the monuments that are a nation's glory. They are more precious than diamonds; and even though they never shine out here, they will sparkle forever and ever in the world to come. But they *do* shine out here.

The man who can rule his own spirit, the noble being who can keep in subjection all the natural evil of his disposition, cannot long be unknown. By his struggle with himself he forms a character which has too much weight, force, and magnitude to be long hid; and men will, in a greater or less degree, be eager to do him honor. Thus it happens that, while the sons of men who gather riches and nourish up their children tenderly, indulging all their wishes, and giving them more dollars than blows, deteriorate, and come to nothing; while they go about hanging on to this relative and that, wherever they can get the least hold, and are despised and disliked by all who know them, and are not mourned when they are dead; the hardy sons of the poor man, the boys who have come up barefooted almost to twenty years of age, and who have been more accustomed to hard cuffs and kicks than to petting and pudding, rise to the top of society and fame.

A SABBATH AFTER SICKNESS.

BY T. D.

Returning health restores my mind,
And gilds anew the scenes around,
Where, 'neath Thy hand, severe but kind,
Most needful discipline I've found.

O, lead me on ; be with me still ;
Though flood or flame should, o'er my path,
Come to perform Thy holy will,
I'd smile upon their fiercest wrath.

I feel that I have stronger grown,
And lean more confidently now
On Him who has such wonders shown,
When lightnings flam'd and storms did blow.

I'm bolder, and know less of fear ;
I've brighter hopes and brighter joys ;
And, while my Heavenly Guide I hear,
I'm calm, amidst the world's loud noise

This holy day, this quiet home ;
The mem'ry of the week's career,
Invite me now to Thee to come,
And ask Thy blessed presence here.

My Savior spreads his feast to-day,
And me, among his poorest friends,
He now invites, and, from above,
His sweet, his loving message sends :

"Ye lab'ring, heavy-laden, come,
Poor, feeble, falt'ring, lame and blind !"
O, cheerful I obey the word,
Accept the invitation kind.

O God ! this heart, so often false,
Wand'ring, ungrateful, changing, now,
In this delightful, holy place,
Awaits the joys Thou canst bestow.

How breaks my heart, how weep mine eyes,
As toward the humblest seat I move
What thoughts unutterable rise !
Who can describe the feast of love !

MY UNCLE'S MYSTERY.

BY OLIVER SINCLAIR.

There was a village mystery about my uncle. There was an early chapter of his life that had never been read by the gossips, and what some people do not understand they try to make mischief out of.

He was a stout, heavy, good-looking man, with a nautical freedom of manner and speech, but at heart a gentleman of the old school. He took off his hat to ladies, and bowed like a gallant knight, and he always carried his vast pockets filled with gingerbread and candy for the children whom he met.

Yet there was an ugly whisper in the village about my uncle. It first came to my ears from overhearing one envious boy say to another, after I had got the prize medal at school—

"Well, he's nothing but a pirate's boy!"

I did not then ask the meaning of their words, as they ran as soon as they saw that I had overheard them, but I wondered what was meant. A few days afterwards one of the same boys insulted a pretty little girl I liked very much, by throwing mud upon her white dress, because she was attired prettier than his sister, and I gave him a sound flogging on the spot. He went off crying, and when he had gotten a safe distance, he called out—

"Oh, you pirate! who's afraid of *you?*"

When I got home I asked my uncle what the boy meant by the words. He smiled and said—

"Let them talk. It can do you no harm, Tom. I've got used to it. If they call you so again, just give them a piratical thrashing."

By the time I had reached my eighteenth year, I had heard so often that my uncle had been a buccaneer in his youth, that I, in some sort, began to believe it. People said he had sailed away from their port a poor man, in command of a schooner loaded with notions for Matanzas, and had, after a year, returned rich as Crœsus, and had bought the old squire's handsome country seat on the hill, and began to live like a nabob.

It was true my uncle dwelt in the stately mansion built by a rich merchant years before, who died without issue, and that he was very rich, and had been a sailor. I did not, however, name the matter to him again until I had returned home after a tour through the United States, preparatory to a voyage to, and a tour in, Europe and the East.

The occasion which led me to question him arose as follows :

When I entered my uncle's door, on my return from my six months' absence, the servant, in reply to my inquiries after my uncle's health, said—

"He is well, sir, save the rheumatiz. He is now in the young lady's room with her father."

"The young lady's room !" I exclaimed. "Who is here, Simon?"

"The young lady that was shipwrecked on the Reeve Rock, sir. She and her father only were saved out of the whole ship's company. Oh, sir, it was a fearful night, that storm !"

"Tell my uncle I am here," I said, full of curiosity, but deferring my inquiries about the strangers till I should see him. He came into his library, and warmly welcomed me with a hearty four-fold hand-shaking. After praising my improved looks, he said—

"Got an addition to the family the last week, Tom."

"I heard so from Simon," I replied. "A young lady, sir."

"How the young dog's eyes brighten! Yes, young, and a little beauty at that. Figure-head perfect. Waist and bows faultless in outline. Spars small, delicate and tapering. Hair long and waving as a pennant. Not eighteen years old, which in a ship is old, but in a girl young. She is now on the stocks under repairs, but will soon be afloat again."

"Shipwrecked?"

"Yes. In the equinox, 25th September—ten days ago. An English ship bound for Boston, but driven on the Reeves, and went to pieces in two hours. This young girl was lashed by her father to a spar, and came ashore more dead than alive! I was at the beach giving orders, and offering money to any who would risk their lives to save the sufferers. She came borne on a wave, and dropped almost at my feet. Her father was swimming and guiding the spar, and was hauled out of the water and saved, though exhausted. I had them borne to my house and put to bed, and sent for the doctors, and here they are. The captain—that's her father—is well ; but she is yet under the weather, sits up but half the day, and kept on short allowance."

"I rejoice at her safety, uncle. Young and beautiful, you said. I must see her."

"I dare say, and fall in love with her, and all that nonsense. But she is a dear girl, and has captivated my old heart from truck to kelson. But I won't stand in your way, Tom. She knows all about you now. I have praised you up to her and to her father to the sky-scrapers."

"What is her name?"

"Mary Barrington. Her father is Captain Barrington, of the British army. He was on his way to Montreal to rejoin his regiment, having had a furlough to go to England and take his daughter from school."

The same evening, in the presence of her father and my uncle, I had the happiness of being presented to the lovely Miss Barrington. She was propped up in an easy chair, with her feet supported by an embroidered stool. She was arrayed in a spotless white wrapper, or *robe de chambre*, and a small, bewithing cap bordered her face. She was pale, but oh, how lovely. What interesting blue eyes, with what a seraphic smile she extended her transparent hand cordially to grasp mine, timidly extended. She seemed to me, in her delicate appearance, rather a being of Heaven than of earth. She was more spiritual in aspect than earthly. The danger she had escaped, with the following fever, had left its impress upon her. The father, a tall, good-looking man, with a military air, and the cold reserve of manner peculiar to the Briton, received me quietly and easily.

Mary Barrington was confined to her room ten days longer, and to the house a month, ere she entirely recovered. Of all that precious time—those sweet days, those loving hours—need I say I made the best improvement. What young hearts, thus thrown together hours alone, reading poetry, talking poetry, looking poetry at each other, would not have become one!

At length the morning came which Captain Barrington, who of late had been very reserved, had fixed upon for his departure for Portland. seventy miles distant, there to take the cars for Montreal. He was warm and earnest in the expressions of his gratitude to my uncle, to whom, he said, he felt he could offer nothing else.

"It is in your power, Captain, to offer me something else," said my uncle, laughing.

The Englishman stared and looked for an explanation, for he knew my uncle was too rich to require gold.

"Your daughter. Give her to me for Tom. He is over head and ears in love with her, and I know she is with him."

"It is out of the question, sir," answered the Englishman, haughtily. "You ask a high price for your hospitality."

"Do not mistake me intentionally, sir," responded my uncle. "For my hospitality, as you term it, I can receive nothing but my own approbation, nor for saving your life and your fair daughter's. I did but pleasantly put the question in that shape. But now I ask you, plainly and above-board, will you give Mary to Tom as a consort, to sail in company the voyage of life?"

"I cannot do any such thing, sir!" answered the officer, in a very decided tone. "I am surprised at your proposition!"

Mary and I were in the adjoining room taking a stolen farewell, and overheard all this. She pressed my hand and said—

"Nevertheless, I will always love you and be true to you."

I embraced the noble girl, and assured her that I would never forget her, and would soon see her at Montreal. My uncle now, in a loud tone, as if displeased, said—

"Captain Barrington, will you explain? Your words and manner are offensive to me."

"You need not ask. The history of your wealth is enough for me to allude to."

At this I at once entered the room, for I keenly understood the allusion.

"My dear uncle, I know that it is in your power to clear your good name, and explain to Captain Barrington's satisfaction what he alludes to. Some enemy has poured into his ears the scandal which you have suffered to exist uncontradicted. My happiness (if not Miss Barrington's) is now at stake. Captain Barrington, you have heard the idle tale that my uncle was once a pirate, and enriched himself by buccaneering!"

"I have, sir," he answered with frankness.

"Uncle, my dear uncle." I said, turning to him with emotion, "will you now lift the vail, and explain the past? You see that I urge this not from any idle curiosity, but my happiness and honor, as well as your own, are at stake,"

"Come in and let us sit down," responded my uncle, with the most perfect placidity and good-humor, "and I will tell you all my story. While it was merely village gossip, I treated it with contempt, but you, dear Tom, have a right to ask for an explanation. I owe it also to my noble friend, Captain Barrington, and this fair maiden, whose eager eyes seem to hang upon my revelation."

MY UNCLE'S STORY.

"The old schooner 'Wildstar' was the only inheritance left me by my father, who commanded her for fifteen years before he died, seven of which I sailed with him. She had been built for a revenue cutter, but drawing too much water, was sold at auction and bought by the old man.

"He ran her in the West India trade so long that she almost knew the way of herself when she fell into my hands. Having recently buried my father on the cape in front of his house, with an old fluke of an anchor placed, at his dying request, at the head of his grave, I loaded the 'Wildstar' with lumber and notions, on a credit, and steered for Matanzas for a market and molasses.

"All went easy and well without incident until I had run into the horse latitudes, where I was becalmed for two days on a shining hot sea, smooth as glass, with as fiery a sun blazing away at us from the unruffled water as from the cloudless sky.

"On the evening of the second day a breeze sprung up, after all hands had whistled eight-and-forty hours for it, and soon afterwards, as we were gliding along at three knots on our course, I saw a brig in the sun.

"It is nothing new to see a ship on the sea ; but this brig I noticed, after dark and towards the middle watch, hauling near me, and at five bells, or half-past two in the morning, she hailed me from the starboard quarter, and commanded me to 'heave-to.'

"Of course I obeyed, for the weaker must yield to the stronger. In a few minutes came another hail—

"'Will you take a passenger?'

"'Ain't no room,' I responded.

"Room or no room, it made no sort of difference. They lowered a boat, and in a short time it was along-side of me, and a man was shoved up from it to my deck, and bundled on board with little ceremony. He moaned as they threw him down. Without a word the boat, which was pulled by four men, with a coxswain, backed oars away, and shot back to the brig, which no sooner received the boat than it filled away, and steered off, close-hauled on the opposite course.

"The night was starry, and I could make out that the passenger was a white man. He stood up and made gestures, while my boy went below for the lantern, that I might look at him. When it came I saw that he was a very pale but good-looking young man, and seemed to be in suffering, from his looks.

"'Who are you?' I asked, holding the lantern to him as he was seated on a bundle of shingles, for he had sunk upon them as from weakness. In reply he held up to me his arms, the hands of which had evidently just been cut off, for the stumps were still bleeding. I uttered a cry of horror, and asked him who had done it. He did not speak, but opening his mouth, showed me that his tongue was out!

"I at once guessed that the brig was a pirate, and that he had been thus treated by the fiends ; but without waiting to ask questions that could not be answered, I took hold of him kindly and tenderly, with one of my men on the other side, and led him down into the cabin. Here I had everything done for his wounds that I knew how, bathing and binding them up, and trying to make them easy, not forgetting a good glass of rum-toddy to strengthen him, for he was ready to faint, poor fellow.

Here was I in a dilemma. Who could he be? Why had he been so treated? These were questions I could not answer. By-and-by he fell asleep, and I examined his clothes, but there was nothing in the pockets at all. Everything by which he could be identified had been removed. Even his clothes were an old jacket and trowsers that had belonged to some sailor, for that he was not a sailor was evident from his complexion, which was as smooth as that of a woman.

"The next morning the brig was out of sight. I kept the schooner on her course southwardly, and as I was going down to breakfast my passenger waked up. He looked about with a startled and bewildered air, and then a deep groan escaped him. My cheery, kind voice seemed to hearten him up, and he smiled and looked more at ease. As he could hear, though he could not speak, I asked him if he would take breakfast. He opened his tongueless and raw mouth, and shook his head. I mixed a cup of tea and handed it to him. He thanked me the best he could by a genntleman-like smile, for a gentleman he was.

"Well, sir, not to be too long, I pitched upon a way before night to make him able to tell me something about himself. I fastened between his toes a long slate pencil, and laid a large slate, on which I wrote my log before copying it into the book, on the floor, as he was seated in a chair. When he saw my preparations, he smiled as if gratified. He seemed with his eyes to say, 'If *they* had suspected *this*, they would not have left me my feet!' Guess my joy when I saw him begin to write, clumsily at first, and in a very large hand, but legibly. As fast as he wrote I copied it, rubbed it out, and let him go on. Here is what was written," said my uncle, going to his desk, and taking from a bunch of old papers a stained document, from which he read as follows :

MY PASSENGER'S STORY.

"I am an English gentleman by birth and education. I was left a lage fortune in Jamaica by an aunt, and went out last year to receive it. I remained there long enough to convert the whole of it into gold. But while there I was inveigled into a marriage with a beautiful but wicked woman, but the particulars I cannot give—they were painful to me, and ignominious to her and her brother, who was the instigator and agent of his sister's marriage. They sought my gold. I did not suspect this until after we were married.

"We prepared to embark for England. My money and plate were to be packed by me in boxes made for the purpose. A faithful servant informed me in time that there was a plot, when I should get to sea, to rob me of my money and leave me, on the part of my wife and her brother. To defeat their object I secretly ordered duplicates of the boxes, and by night filling one set with iron and pebbles, I carefully iron-bound them openly the next day, and sent them on board the vessel, while my treasures I by night placed in the other boxes, and with the aid of my faithful slave conveyed them to a safe hiding-place, known only to himself and to me. This I did, intending, when I reached England, to send him back for them by another ship. The result, alas! proved as my servant and my own fears foretold. I had been but five days at sea when I learned from my servant, who was ever watchful for my safety, that there was a plan, into which the captain, a bad man, had been brought by bribes, to put me on board some vessel and share my treasure among them. The amount of it was three hundred thousand dollars. Indignant at this treachery, I could not conceal my feelings, but yesterday unguardedly charged my wife with her intentions. She denied all such purpose—strove to caress me, and lull my fears. But the snare was spread, and I became the victim. When night came on I was seized in my state-room, gagged, and taken into the hold of the brig, where the captain cut off my hands while I was held by two men, one of whom was my brother-in-law. Oh, the agony of that anguish!

"'You shall neither tell nor write your wrongs,' said my wife. 'We shall see to that.'

"I was then ungagged, and my tongue seized, and severed with a long knife. Then my brother-in-law proposed that, as they had gone so far, they had best kill me to put me out of my sufferings. My wife and the captain objected, the latter saying he would not do murder on board his ship, if he did, my spirit would haunt it. So it was decided to put me on board your vessel, which had been seen before dark, and the neighborhood of which had led them to bring their crime to a head. They staunched my bleeding wrists as well as they could, and at length I was borne into a boat, and taken on board your vessel."

"Here," said my uncle with emotion, having read so far, "his narrative ended, which he had written out from time to time, as he had strength, during the next day, but which I have given you all together."

"This is a strange tale," said the English officer. "It has deeply interested me."

"And these dreadful men did not get the gold after all, did they, sir?" asked Mary.

"No. Their rage and disappointment, when they opened the boxes, and found only pieces of iron and stones instead of gold and silver, must have been great enough," answered my uncle.

"And did the poor young man live?" asked Miss Barrington.

"No. Mortification set in the third day, and he died on the sixth. I buried him in the sea. But he left with me, in return for my little kindness to him, the secret of the hiding-place. Instead of going to Matanzas, I steered straight for Jamaica, and in good time came to anchor in the harbor. I sold my cargo there to advantage, but my chief object was to find the boxes of gold. The place was so accurately described that I had no difficulty in recognizing it. Taking four men, I removed at night just one half of the boxes, leaving the rest for the faithful servant, should he ever return, and also a paper for the servant, (if by chance he could read,) informing him of the sad fate of his master. With this treasure I sailed from the port without a clearance, and reached Boston in a run of sixteen days. Now, Captain, you know the secret of my wealth, which I, from my heart, wish the proper owner was now alive to enjoy. You see I am no buccaneer," added my uncle, smiling

"You have not told me the name of the unfortunate young man."

"It is here, at the bottom of this paper. I copied it from his own signature on the slate—

"Edward B. Vincent."

The officer sprang to his feet, and seized the paper with a sudden eagerness which surprised all of us.

"It must be—it is my elder brother, Edward Barrington, Lord Vincent, who was lost, as we supposed, in returning from Jamaica with a young wife and a large fortune in gold!"

These words were uttered with amazing and startling vehemence.

"You stare upon me!" continued he. "I half guessed the truth before you had completed and given the name. This, then, was the horrible fate of my poor brother! There is no doubt of it at all—none! To this dreadful end he came. Describe him, sir."

"He was slender, with large black eyes, about six-and-twenty, with brown, curling hair coming to to a point in front, like the pictures of Lord Byron."

"The very likeness! Alas! alas! alas! Poor, poor Edward! What a fate for one like thee!"

For a few moments all of us were silent, respecting the grief of the brother, which evinced itself in burning tears. At length he said—

"My brother's departure in the brig 'Nautilus,' from Jamaica, twenty-eight years ago, was gazetted two months after in the London papers, the news being brought by other vessels ; but the 'Nautilus' was never heard of. After two years we gave my brother up as lost, with his wife and treasure, and the next youngest brother, now my older, succeeded to the title. How mysterious is all this, that at this period of time we should meet and hear this wonderful revelation from you. Without doubt Heaven, in horror of the crime, destroyed the vessel ere she reached land."

"Without doubt," answered my uncle, Mary and I, in one voice.

"My wealth, then," said my uncle, cheerfully, "is yours, Captain."

"No, your own—my dear brother's gift. But that there may be no difference between us, bound together by my brother's memory as we now are, let my daughter and your son unite the fortune you were to give him in their own persons. Mary, your hand, dear."

He placed the fair girl's hand in mine, and blessed us.

My three-fold story is done. The residue of the gold was exhumed from the soil of Jamaica, where it had lain untouched, with my uncle's letter upon it, the old servant having probably perished at sea, the innocent with the guilty, as it always is in this world of discrepancies and discords.

I now reside in my uncle's fine old mansion by the sea, while he is our honored guest, and a great favorite with his grand-children, whom he nightly amuses with his "tales of the sea."

TAKING A WHALE OFF CALLAO.

While several foreign vessels were lying at Callao (the port of Lima), one pleasant day in 1831, a whale appeared outside, and several boats went in pursuit, which, after a lively chase, killed and took it. The story was told in the newspapers of the season, and it was said that the capture was made by the crew of an American vessel. There was much excitement about it at the time among the sailors in that port. I happened, several years afterwards, to meet with two men who were spectators of the scene, and they gave me their separate accounts of it. They were on board different vessels, and entirely unacquainted with each other, one belonging at the time to the U. S. frigate Potomac, then on her voyage around the world, and the other to the U. S. schooner Dolphin.

The former informed me that boats put off from a French and two American whaling vessels, which happened to be in the port, and that, after a long chase, the whale was killed, and the prize awarded to one of the Americans. He said, however, that one of the French boats appeared to be up with the foremost, and, indeed, during the greater part of the chase, on the lead. He was too far off to see distinctly, and never understood the particulars, but was agreeably disappointed, when the report came that his countrymen were the successful party.

My second informant, whom I met with in 1847, gave me substantially the following story. It agreed with all the notices I had formerly seen published on the subject, but was much longer than any of them, and contained some interesting details, which rendered the result very plain, and accounted for what my first informant was unable to understand. He began thus :—

"I was then a midshipman on board the U. S. schooner Dolphin, and, being the youngest, accompanied our captain, in his gig, on board an American whaler which had just arrived. About nine o'clock in the morning a whale appeared off the harbor, and the cry was heard of—'There she blows!' Boats were immediately launched from the vessel in which I was, and from another American whaler, and also a French one. I asked my captain's permission to get into the boat alongside, which was granted. We had five men beside the captain of the vessel, who steered. The harpooner was an old Nantucket Indian. He took his place, as usual, at the bow. Two other boats beside ours were sent out from our whaler, four from the other American, and four or five from the French whaler. A great strife immediately began. Each crew labored to the utmost to get first to the whale. The oars bent as I had never seen them before. Our boat got on well, and we soon found only one of the others was able to keep near us. That was one of the French ones, which kept along exactly in a line, and proved to be fully equal to us, though we pulled for a long time with our utmost strength. Not a word was spoken as we came near the whale. Our two boats were as near each other as could be without interfering with our oars—that is, about fourteen feet apart. We came up abreast of the whale, which was about forty feet from us. The harpooners had both taken in their oars, and stood up in the bows, with their harpoons ready. The French boat was inside, nearest the whale, and of course had the best chance at him. Whoever strikes a whale first has a right to claim him. This is the law everywhere, allowed by all nations. The Frenchmen felt sure of the prize, and we all supposed we had lost him. But just then, to the astonishment of us all, our old Indian threw his harpoon with great force into the air, over the heads of the Frenchmen, and then, instantly taking the coil of rope which he had held in his left hand, tossed it forward, so that it struck the water ahead of their bows, and sank just in time for their boat to go over without touching it. While the keel was passing over the coil, the harpoon was falling upon the whale, and it struck him close up to his back-fin, sinking nearly up to the handle—no danger of coming out.

"A general shout rose from our boat, and all the others near us except the Frenchman. Their harpooner stood still, with his harpoon raised, and such a look in his face as I shall never forget. Surprise, disappointment and shame seemed to have stupefied him so that for some time he did not move. The whale sunk as soon as he felt the blow ; and while the French oarsmen were beginning to turn for the shore, we began to feel the whale pulling us outside. He drew us very fast ; being unable to "sound," that is, to go very deep, the water being there only about thirty-five fathoms. He pulled us along at a brisk rate ; and, the force being partly downwards, the bow of our boat was buried deep in the water, like a plough set rank in the ground. The waves were cut through by us, and thrown up violently in foam on both sides, rising about as high as our heads. The sound as we rushed on was very loud and roaring ; and this, my first "Nantucket sleigh-ride," as the whalemen call it, lasted about three quarters of an hour. We then approached some small islands, about twenty miles from Callao ; and the whale, which had been spouting blood almost from the first, rose, and appeared much enfeebled, and remained above water long enough for us to come up and throw another harpoon into him, after which he received several stabs from spears ; and, after being lanced, he rolled over, flapped his tail two or three times, with violent and frightful convulsions, and soon ceased to move.

"We had now another serious task before us, in towing the dead whale to Callao. It is customary for the ship to come and take charge of a whale when one has been captured by the boats ; but the whaler was at anchor, and could not come, so that there was no alternative left us but to tow the immense animal, by main force of rowing, to the land. We were soon joined by the three other boats belonging to the whaler ; and, having fastened two ropes to the jaw-bone, through a hole cut in the mouth, we bent to our oars. That was the hardest day's work, on the whole, that I ever performed. We did not reach the frigate Potomac till late in the afternoon, and she was anchored outside of the other shipping. We passed the other vessels, and they gave us very hearty cheers. It was a right whale we had taken, of uncommon size, yielding forty barrels of oil.

"The Americans regarded the victory as a kind of national triumph, and we were all highly complimented on our success. I have never, however, seen the credit given to the poor and humble Indian, to whose unexampled skill, great coolness, and strength of arm, it was due." T. D.

LITTLE THINGS.

The more one observes the influence that there is in little things the more is one astonished at it. How is it that there is so much in even the curve of a hat, or in the arrangement of a person's hair, to affect favorably or unfavorably the mind?

"Pooh! pooh!" puffs out some Father Sensible, who believes that *he* is above being influenced by trifles. "It is all imagination, nonsense. There is not an atom of real power in such things. I care nothing whatever for a person's apparel ; nor is *any* sensible person affected thereby."

Begging your pardon, father, you are altogether wrong. Wrong from beginning to end. You may spend your breath denying the influence of minute matters ; you may maintain that a person's dress has nothing to do with your opinion of him, but you cannot alter facts. The influence *is* where we say that it is, and, what is more, *you* feel it. One way or another you certainly do feel it, for you are only *human*, wise as you are.

One's whole idea of, and feeling towards, a stranger is modified, if not altogether caused, by some apparently slight accident of dress, or by the air of wearing that dress.

There is character in the very putting on of one's hat ; and in the cut of a man's beard there are volumes to be read ; (when he cuts it all off there's nothing of him left to read ; he has, as to looks, tried to make a woman of himself, and failed, &c.) How *one fault* will mar an otherwise pleasing character ; how one ugly feature will injure the looks of a beautiful face. How having one just cause of contemptuous dislike for a man will destroy admiration for even his really excellent points. These are tendences that all should watch against ; but they are most natural ones. One little thing forgotten will often make void the most mighty works of monarchs or statesmen ; and one ingredient left out will ruin—the plumb pudding of the best of cooks—witness a recent article of the sort, made *with* cream of tartar and *without* soda.

On the tendency of a single word or sentence the fortune of a whole future life may turn.

If a girl says "no," expecting to be coaxed into reversing her word, and if nobody coaxes her, the consequences of that "little thing" are sometimes loss of a lover, a home, plenty, happiness, and content. On the contrary, if she says "yes" in too great a hurry—fearing that no better chance will offer—the consequences of *that* "little thing" often are a good-for-nothing husband, an unhappy home, and a slave's life of miserable oppression and discontent.

Going up stairs instead of down has changed many a person's life-long destiny—and going *down* stairs too hastily has *stopped* many a person's destiny, for *this* world.

A letter! what a little thing it is! how valueless, how powerless it looks, as it tumbles from the mail bag—or is passed carelessly through the fingers of the clerk ; yet who does not *know* how mighty for joy or woe, for blessing or for cursing is the letter?

A brimstone match is a little thing ; but with it one may light a fire which shall consume cities or forests.

An asp is a little thing ; and its sting is death.

It is not much to say, "I do not love you"—but when these words are said, under certain circumstances, they shut out hope and peace from the human soul ; they turn gentleness to fury, and love to hate ; and they make the places where dwelt lambs and doves into a den of tigers. H. M.

ANCIENT OLD FOGYISMS.

It was the married women only among the ancient Romans, who were allowed the favor of eating at the same table with their haughty lords. The use of wine was strictly forbid them, it being considered a species of poison for the fair sex ; and lest the prohibition might have rendered the temptation invincible, they were never entrusted with the key of the wine-cellar. Is it not probable that master-keys were the invention of that age? The admission of married women to their banquets was even an innovation, for amongst the Greeks, the most polished people of antiquity, females were never permitted to appear at table. The hoary-headed members of the feast might have solaced themselves for the absence of the women, by discussing the interests of the common weal, or talking wisdom ; though not unfrequently these resources seem to have failed them, as we find they were often driven to the more frivolous occupation of proposing and divining riddles, enigmas, rebusses, and even humble charades. During all which time the younger part of the company were forced to be mere listeners, as silence in the presence of their elders was considered an indispensable quality in the youth of those days. The only consolation was the distant prospect of being gifted, by old age, with the privilege of being as garrulous as their fathers,—a privilege of which they seemed to take full advantage, as nothing could exceed the fluency of a Greek of certain age.

HYMN TO THE LATE AUTUMN.

BY WILLIAM ROSS WALLACE.

I.

I know that thou art beautiful,
Late Autumn! with thy plumes
Of crimson, purple, green and gold,
Amid the thickening glooms:
I know there is a music sweet
From thy soft western breeze,
That like a thoughtful minstrel moves
Among the answering trees;
But still a sadness and unrest
When thou dost come, will take my breast

II.

How drearily then the withered leaves
Will rustle to my tread,
And I must think of those within
The City of the Dead;
The eloquent music of the wind
Will but a requiem seem
Along the painted forest-aisles,
And by the darkling stream;
The purple leaf, the hectic flower,
Seem chosen for a burial hour.

III.

The very sky, though glowing still
With yonder glorious sun,
Or stars that proudly guard the moon
When she his realm hath won;
The very sky will have a hue
That wakens solemn thought,
And all the clouds appear to me
For some great sorrow brought—
Some sorrow I cannot divine,
Yet shadowing vale and mountain-shrine.

IV.

And yonder Ocean, on whose strand
I've walked in summer-time,
And heard, with light, exultant soul,
The everlasting chime—
That Ocean—ah! what mournful notes
Will then arise to me,
Speaking of faded Life, and Death,
And vailed Eternity:
I can but lay me down and moan
In unison with every tone.

V.

I know there are some souls whose mold
Is such that they can ne'er
This weird, sad feeling understand,
When comes the fading year;
But it is mine; and oh! how oft
I have in vain essayed
To call a happier aspect up,
And wave away the shade:
Then, till the sad, dark scenes pass by,
To other regions let me fly!

VI.

No! shrinking spirit, no! perchance
This gloom but brings to thee
A blessing bright, and broad, and deep
In its great mystery:
Not from the touch of Joy alone
The soul perfected stands;
A sober, lasting majesty
Must come from Sorrow's hands;
Oh, this the lesson Autumn speaks
On withering glens and shadowed peaks!

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THE INDIAN GAME OF HAND.

BY EMERSON BENNETT.

There is in all games of chance a certain wild fascination, which seizes upon the mind and holds it by a spell against which nothing can prevail. Reason, conscience, friendship, love—all intellect, all intuition, all ennobling virtues—are set aside by this demon of infatuation, which has enthroned itself within the highest and holiest sanctuary of the human temple.

This it is which makes the vice of gambling so fearfully hideous in the sight of the reasoning and pure of heart—for they know that it maddens, and that there is no evil excess of which the madman may not be guilty. Go where you will among the gamblers, of any and every description and grade, and you will find men reckless of every moral and religious principle—reckless of money, of honor, and of life. Once drawn within the dread vortex of gaming—within that accursed circle where the wildest passions seethe and whirl without restraint—and the man is as surely lost as the vessel in the Mælstrom.

But great and detestible as this monster vice is, it prevails among all kindreds, nations, and tongues throughout the world—alike in the rude wigwam of the savage, and the palatial *salon* of the Parisian *roue*. No station, as a station, however exalted or however humble, is exempt from it, and its effects are alike baneful and destructive to all.

Among *Christian* nations the victim stakes his all—the all perhaps of those dependent upon him—and then adds the crowning crime of murder, by sending his own soul untimely into the presence of his Maker. Among barbarous nations, the victim, having lost his all, wagers a hand, an arm, a leg, a scalp, and sometimes his life, against a trifling stake—and, losing still, submits to the horrid mutilation without demur.

And what to a disinterested spectator would seem the strangest fact of all, is the simplicity of many of the most fearful games—the mere turn of a card or die, or the changing from one hand to another of a fruit-stone, deciding the forfeiture of money, limbs, and life. But whether it be complicated or the reverse—the fascinating Faro and Roulette of civilized fashion, or the simple Game of Hand of the border savage—the effect is the same—blasting, blighting, damnable!

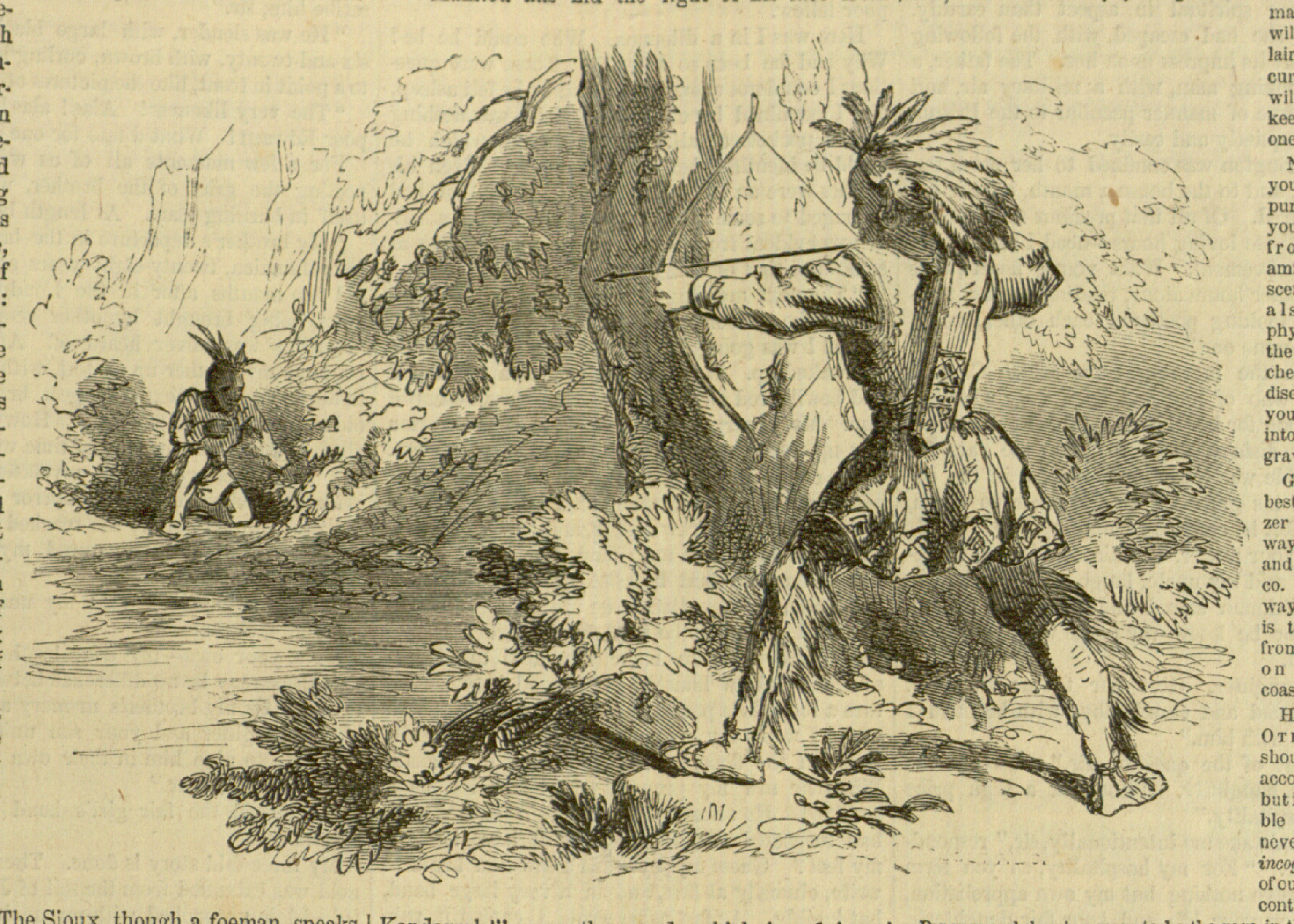
The most simple of all games, and one which might hardly be thought worthy to amuse a child, is the Game of Hand, as played by the savages of the Far West. It consists in one party shaking a plum or cherry stone between his concave palms, closing both hands suddenly, and leaving the other party to guess which hand contains the stone—the latter either winning or losing his stake, whatever it may be, according as he names the right hand or the wrong. And yet, simple and nonsensical as this game may appear to the reason, it becomes one of most intense and terrible interest to the forest native, who will spend hours, and even days, in contest with an opponent, and only end in being the winner of all the other possesses, or the loser of all he can call his own, perhaps even his scalp and life.

Away out in the deep wilderness of that vast region of the Far West over which the foot of the white man has seldom passed, there bubbles up, with a hissing, purring sound, a spring of such clear, delicious water, that he who quenches his thirst thereat has only to regret that he can drink no more. This particular spring, like many of its kind, is impregnated with medicinal minerals, and pours its sparkling waters over the purest of white sand, through the sweetest of romantic valleys, and is held sacred as "great medicine" by all the different tribes who know of its locality.

Toward this spring one day, some several hundred moons ago, when the red man of this far-off region only had his quarrel with a foeman of his race, a young Sioux chief, in all the pride of paint and arms, was bending his steps, in eager haste, to quench his thirst and resume his journey, for he was alone upon the war path of the hated Crows, and had sworn to his Indian love to bring her the scalp of a foe as a bridal present ere the filling moon should wane.

But as, with the quick, light, and proud step of a skillful and daring brave, he came in sight of the sacred spring, what should his eyes behold but the person of a hated Crow, bending over and slaking his thirst with the sparkling, bubbling, life-renewing waters! Here was the very chance he was seeking; and quickly fitting an arrow to his bow, he threw his right foot gracefully back, drew the arrow to the head, and was just springing his arms for the fatal twang, when, like a blinding flash, the truth burst over him, that this was holy ground, and ground of peace, and that the Great Spirit would be angry with whomsoever should take vengeance upon a foe within its hallowed precincts. With this remembrance the arrow was again clasped peacefully; and advancing straight to his recumbent foe, the Sioux chief proudly spoke:

"Shangasgah's eyes are keen, and he sees his foes afar; but within the hallowed light of Manitou the red deer might gambol undisturbed, though the young chief of the Sioux were dying of starvation."



At the first sounds of these words the Crow looked up; and then, rising with dignity, made answer when the Sioux had done:—"The Sioux, though a foeman, speaks with the reverence of a friend of this sacred place, and Kandarrah would never have shut his eyes and ears on other ground. The eyes of Kandarrah see clearly where other eyes fail, and the faintest sound is as thunder to his ears. But come! we will smoke the pipe of peace by the spring of Manitou, and when each is again upon his war-path, it shall be proved who is the greatest warrior of the two."

With this the two warriors approached and shook hands as friends; and the Crow, producing his pipe, filled with kinnik-kinnik, (a substitute for tobacco among the western tribes,) he lit it, and puffing four whiffs to the four points of the compass, he handed it to the Sioux, who followed his example. The Sioux then drank his fill at the spring; after which he proposed, as they were on sacred ground, where they could not fight, that both should sit down together, and peacefully pass the day in the fascinating game of Hand.

Accordingly, seating themselves near the spring, the fruit-stone was produced, and the game was begun with all the zest of two professional gamblers, each alternately hiding and guessing in the manner previously described. An arrow against an arrow was the first stake of each; and the very arrow which Shangasgah, the Sioux, had pointed with deadly intent at Kandarrah, the Crow, was the first stake lost and won.

This seemed a precursor of the fortune of the day; and arrow after arrow was staked by the Sioux, and won by the Crow, till the sheaf of Shangasgah was empty. Next his bow was staked and lost; then his club, his tomahawk, his blanket, and lastly his only remaining garments; all were staked in turn and all were lost; and as the Sioux rose to his feet, entirely naked, with nothing but what nature gave him, and without a weapon for defense, he said, with the dignity becoming the younger chief of a powerful tribe:

"Fortune has proved fickle to Shangasgah, who is now as the Great Spirit made him, and his many losses will bring joy to the lodge of Kandarrah; but Shangasgah has one stake yet to offer against what he has lost—a stake which, if won by Kandarrah, will bring him great honor among his nation: he offers to play his scalp against the winnings of his foe!"

The black eyes of the Crow gleamed with fierce delight as he accepted the challenge, and the game was played for the stake which both prized more than all the rest.

Fortune, however, still frowned upon the Sioux, and the game was won by his enemy. Without a murmur the loser now bent his head to the grasp of the winner; who, seizing the scalp-lock with one hand, and whirling the glittering knife around it with the other, tore off the bloody trophy, and shook it aloft in triumph.

The young Sioux chief, having no more then to offer, said he would go back to his tribe, re clothe and re-arm himself, and at a certain day in the future, which he named, he would again meet the Crow if he dared, and again venture his all upon the game which had for the time ruined him. Kandarrah promptly accepted the challenge, and the two warriors separated—the one to return to his home in triumph, and the other in gloom and disgrace.

True to their appointments, some several days after the events we have described, these two daring warriors again met alone, within the hallowed precincts of the sacred spring, and the game was again renewed with an eagerness never surpassed by two skillful gamesters in civilized life.

But fortune, ever fickle in games of chance, had now changed. This day the star of the Sioux was in the ascendant. All his former losings were won back, one at a time, until all were again in his possession. And still the exciting game went on, and still the Crow lost, till he at last stood naked as his foe had done before him.

"Kandarrah still owns his scalp," he exclaimed, somewhat fiercely; "and the scalp of a Crow is worth more than the scalp of a Sioux, with all his fortune added; but Kandarrah is great and generous—he stoops not to the small traffic of a squaw—and he will play his scalp against even the winnings of Shangasgah."

"The scalp of a Crow is better than the skin of a wolf," returned the other, with an ironical smile; "and though not the worth of what Kandarrah has lost, Shangasgah will suffer the game to proceed. Let the Crow name the hand which shall give him his winnings or Shangasgah his scalp!"

As he spoke he shook the fruit-stone between the concave palms, closed both hands suddenly, and held them forward to the other; who, after a single moment's hesitation, put his right finger upon the left hand of the Sioux.

"The scalp of the Crow shall bring joy to the lodge of the brave Sioux chief!" exclaimed Shangasgah, with a grim smile of triumph, as he unclosed his fingers and showed an empty palm.

With a sullen and mortified look, the Crow silently bent his head to the knife of his foe, and a moment later his gory scalp was dangling before his eyes in the grasp of his enemy.

And now it was that, urged to desperation by his situation, the Crow hesitated not a moment to offer his life as a stake against the other's winnings. The wager was instantly accepted; and this time the Crow hid the fruit-stone, and his opponent named the hand.

But fate had doomed Kandarrah; and the hand which Shangasgah touched instantly opened, only to disclose the prize.

"Manitou has hid the light of his face from Kandarrah!" were the words which issued in a solemn, mournful tone from the lips of the doomed savage, as he slowly lifted his eyes towards the heavens. "Yes," he added, "the face of Manitou is behind the cloud, and the breast of Kandarrah shall be a sheath to the knife of Shangasgah. Strike! the war-brave of the great Crow nation knows no fear!"

These were the last words which ever passed the lips of the fated Crow—for scarcely were they uttered, ere, to the very haft, the knife of Shangasgah was plunged through his heart.

He fell without a groan, and died by the pure waters of the sacred spring, and the wolves came and devoured his body.

Shangasgah returned in triumph to his Indian love; and thenceforth, to the day of his death, he wore his own and his enemy's scalp suspended from his ears, in accordance with his barbarous ideas of honor and of glory.

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NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

E. S. Y.—We do not know "what is to be understood when a gentleman asks a lady for her company." It must depend upon the circumstances of the case, which vary infinitely. "Natron" is *native carbonate of soda*. We cannot explain chemical terms so as to be understood by a person who is entirely ignorant of the science of chemistry, and of chemical substances, any more than we could make a person who has always lived in a tropical climate and has never seen a bit of ice, comprehend the freezing of water. Perhaps you remember the anecdote of the missionary who came near losing his head by trying to explain the latter phenomena to the old Hindoostani chieftain, who became enraged at the "impertinence" of the honest missionary in telling him to his face that in America the water of the rivers sometimes becomes so hard that people could drive horses and vehicles across them with perfect safety. If a young lady has nothing else to do, her time would not be thrown away in studying Greek. The mental labor and discipline would do her good.

P. P. P.—We cannot enter into a discussion in regard to "the merits and claims of rival inventors and discoverers in magnetic telegraphy." There is glory and fame enough in the results for all of them, and he will probably come off best in the end, who disputes least and works most at the practical application of his inventions and discoveries to the every-day business of telegraphing. What the people want and will pay for is to have the thing done in the safest, speediest, cheapest and most reliable manner. They don't care *how* it is done, nor *when* it was *first* done, nor what instrument it is done with. With them the points are, How soon can you do it? and what do you charge?

SPARTACUS.—Thomas Addis Emmett was forty years of age when he came to this country. He was both a physician and a lawyer. He adopted the profession of the law, and by the aid of old Governor Clinton was admitted to the bar of New York in 1805. He was appointed Attorney-General of the State in 1812. He died in 1827, being smitten down by a stroke of apoplexy, as he was pleading a cause in which he was much interested. We believe that Robert Emmett, the celebrated Irish Patriot, was tendered a commission in the French army, and perhaps held one for a time, but we do not recollect of his having *served* under the French flag.

ENCOURAGEMENT.—Your case is a rather discouraging one, but if you and your wife continue "to work and save," you will come out right at last. Do not allow yourselves to get down-hearted and acquire a habit of complaining or fretting at your lot. *That* would ruin you. Bear up with cheerfulness, maintain a bold front, and teach your children habits of industry, and you will soon begin to get ahead in the world, and peace and competence will smile on your declining years, while those of your acquaintances who now *seem* to be so much better off than yourselves, and who "spend as they go," will be apt to encounter an old age of want and suffering.

J. S. wants to know why the *closing* exercises of the sessions of colleges are called *commencements*, and why the *last* day is called *commencement* day. One of the meanings of the word "commence," is, *to take a degree in a university or college*; and hence the "commencement day" is the *degree day*, or the day on which degrees are publicly bestowed. On that day students "commence bachelors," or are made bachelors of arts.

C. E. L.—It is impossible for us to "tell you how to get a sum of money left you by a deceased uncle six or seven years ago," as we know nothing about the circumstances. If you had five dollars to spare for a lawyer, it would avail you nothing, as no lawyer would be apt to attend to the business for that sum. You could, perhaps, make an arrangement with some one to obtain the money for you, and take his pay out of the proceeds.

G. N. C.—The carrier-dove cannot be sent *from home* to any place to which it is desirable to have a message conveyed. They are taken from their owner's residence, when some member of the family wishes to send back a message, to the place from which the message is to be sent, and the letter being attached to the bird's leg or neck, the dove is set at liberty and at once flies back home. Messages can be sent by the carrier-dove only from abroad to its home.

J. W. R.—You are needlessly alarmed. Your "hardened and infidel neighbors" can make no headway in their threatened attempts to crush out Christianity and overthrow the Bible. Let them go ahead, and they will soon make themselves ridiculous and contemptible. The translators of the Bible did their work well, and the version in common use is devoid of any misprints or errors of importance.

ALBION.—Your recipe for making bird-lime, though good, is valueless in this country, as the English holly cannot be found here. The numbers of the LEDGER containing the story of "Richard Hoffman," to date, will be $1,52.

U. S. N.—See the LEDGER for March 14th, 1857, (which can be obtained of us, or ordered through any newsdealer,) for a full statement of the qualifications necessary to gain admittance to the Naval Academy at Annapolis, Md.

CAVILER.—Ask the young lady what the matter is. That is the best way to ascertain why she treats you so coolly. She will probably tell you at first that "nothing is the matter"—and that may be the truth.

ATTENTION.—A slaveholder does not have more than one vote, no matter if he own ten thousand slaves. We know there is a popular idea to the contrary, which has probably grown out of the fact that in enumerating the people for the purpose of appointing Congressional representation three-fifths of the slaves are counted in, according to a provision of the Constitution of the United States. This gives a slave *State* more members of Congress than it would otherwise have, but it does not enable an individual slaveholder to cast more than one vote at an election.

SUBSCRIBER.—You are jealous, and magnify molehills into mountains. We see nothing in your statement which would justify you in supposing that your betrothed loves you less now than at any former time. She cannot refuse the courteous attentions of all her male friends. She must be sociable with them. Pay no attention to such small matters, but show her by your generous confidence that in marrying you she will not enter the lair of a cross old curmudgeon, who will jealously keep her imprisoned therein.

N. A. H.—Let your thoughts be pure and keep your imagination from wandering amid unhallowed scenes. Consult, also, a skillful physician. Unless the tendency be checked and the disease overcome, you will soon sink into a premature grave.

G. L. T.—The best route to Frazer River is by way of Panama and San Francisco. The next best way to go there is to sail direct from some port on the Atlantic coast for Victoria.

HARVEY AND OTHERS.—We should be glad to accommodate you but it is an inflexible rule with us never to unvail the *incognito* of any of our anonymous contriubtors.

PIC-NICS and dancing seem to be the rage in the country at this time, as we have received a very large number of letters, from different sections, like the following: "Suppose a young man goes to a pic-nic, and wants to dance with a strange young lady whom he sees there for the first time, and who is quite pretty. On being intruduced to her, how must he begin the conversation, and in what manner ask her to dance?" We will answer this question in a way to make it suffice for all who have asked similar ones. In the first place, a bashful young man should not attempt to force conversation with a lady; he will be certain to make an awkward mess of it; he had better keep silent or go away. When he wants a lady to dance with him, all he has to do is to *ask* her, in the most straightforward manner, to dance with him. There is no need of any longwinded conversation or preliminary fuss about it. A simple—"Will you dance the next sett with me?" is all that is required. In all social gatherings, the simpler the etiquette and behavior the better, care, of course, being taken, that no rudeness or vulgarity be perpetrated. Unsophisticated young men have always been afraid of girls, and we suppose they always will be. But girls are perfectly harmless creatures, and would not hurt a hair of any unmarried man's head for the world, widowers included. Young men can therefore approach and talk with them with perfect safety, (except as to their hearts,) and the plainer and the more direct the talk the better.

S. I. W.—You seem to think that the *sect* constitutes the *religion*, and that a member of one church must necessarily profess a different religion from that of the member of another church. The *religion* of all Christian sects is substantially the same, although they differ in their respective modes of worship and church government. We do not believe in a man's changing his sect at the dictation of another, and would not advise any man to marry a woman who made such a change a condition of her acceptance of his hand. As a general thing, it is not judicious for people belonging to different churches to intermarry. It is an awkward and unpleasant business for a husband and wife to go in different directions to church, and be separated in their worship; and besides, when the children arrive at a church-going age, it is natural for the wife to wish them to attend her church in preference to any other, while the husband will of course prefer to have them attend his. Husband and wife should be one in heart, mind, interest and belief.

MANY CORRESPONDENTS have written us in such an illegible manner that we could not afford the time and eyesight requisite for the deciphering of their communications. Letters which are written on *white* paper, with good *black* ink, and in a plain hand, always receive the preference. There is another point to which we call particular attention, namely: correspondents often say, "Send me a marked copy of the number of the LEDGER in which your answer to this question appears." We never comply with any such "order." Persons who do such things, of course have no idea of the magnitude and complexity of our business, else they would never make such a request.

WHIP.—It could not be expected of a man that he would act with consummate judgment while undergoing the ignominious process of a cowhiding, unexpectedly executed by a woman in a public and crowded thoroughfare. There were but three things which your friend could have done, under the circumstances, namely: first, to run; second, to take forcible possession of the cowhide; third, to stand and take the flogging. We do not think that he should be blamed for preferring to take the cowhide, instead of taking the flogging, or taking to his heels.

FRIEND OF THE FRIENDLESS.—The enterprise of removing orphan children, and children of destitute, criminal, drunken, or improvident parents, from this city to the West, is a most beneficent one, and is in excellent hands. You need not be afraid of imposition so far as its managers are concerned. They are honorable men, and are doing a most needed and important work. In contributing to their aid, you would be helping on one of the most unexceptionable charities of the age.

E. DE M.—You cannot hit upon a better plan than the one you have been practising. Keep on paying your attentions to the youngest sister in the same way, until fortune favors you so far as to give you a clear field. Be careful, however, to act so that the eldest will not suppose your attentions are meant for her. Let it gradually become apparent to the youngest that you love her, and if she reciprocates your affection, you will have plain sailing.

CHAPARRAL.—We know nothing about the justice or injustice of your claims, or those of your comrades, on the Mexican government, or the government of the United States, and have not six months' time to devote to an examination of the subject for the purpose of qualifying ourself to give an opinion thereon.

ILLINOIS, Fulton.—The person to whom you refer cannot have read the LEDGER. If he has read it, then his conduct cannot be explained on the hypothesis assumed by you. You are right in what you say with regard to a man's meanness who will pocket his conscience whenever by doing so he can pocket money along with it.

SALADIN.—We cannot approve your course of action, notwithstanding its "having met the universal approbation of your friends." A man has no business, under any circumstances, to act rudely to a lady, or to use indelicate words in reproving her for fancied or real misconduct.

WEST TENNESSEE.—We really cannot imagine why your lady-love, to whom you are soon to be married, has never allowed, and will not now permit, you to kiss her. But don't mind it. Her lip-harvest is ripening, and you should not worry her about the matter.

A. A. A.—We think that "a few young ladies" had better *not* "propose to a young gentleman to correspond." The business of *proposing*, in all matters between the sexes, properly belongs to the masculine side.

R. W. J.—Pimples on the face are usually occasioned by impurity of the blood. Get your blood into first-rate order and keep it so, and you will probably be no more troubled with pimples on your face.

KATE.—You had better not voluntarily *commence* a correspondence with a young man whom you "only know by reputation;" even should he write to you first, you should be cautious how you encourage him.

L. F. N.—A man who has a lady's daguerreotype in his possession, should return it to her on being requested to do so. We do not think that a *gentleman* would refuse to do so.

N. N. N.—You do not write a good business hand. The population of New Orleans is not so great as that of Cincinnati.

S. F. W.—We like the style and tone of your letter exceedingly, and regret that it is not in our power to serve you.

M. E. N.—We cannot engage any new contributors. Your verses have not *substance* enough in them.

HARRIETTE.—Do you not know that it is one of the most difficult things in the world to do, if not *the* most difficult thing, to say what is or would be *right* in any given complex case? In fact, it is impossible for finite beings to determine perfectly what is exactly the right thing to do in any such case. Judges, and counsel, and jurors can only take cognizance of the tangible substances that go to the making up of the case—such things as can be seen, or got at materially, and on these they argue, and adjudicate, and render verdicts. But what of the intangible substances?—the heart-rackings, the soul-tortures, the spirit-agonies which the parties suffer? These can be estimated and passed upon only by the Infinite. And among the perplexing and painful questions of this life, the question of divorce holds a chief rank. Look at your friend's case. As you have stated it, what could be more pitiful? And yet, who shall decide it as you wish us to do—that is to say, who shall declare what, under all the circumstances—physical, affectional, domestic, social and spiritual—would be exactly the right thing for the mourning and unhappy wife to do? Did you or your suffering friend ever take the trouble to consider closely what a wife and mother's position is in this land of liberty of ours?—what her rights, duties and relations are?—what she has a right to expect and claim from society, the laws, her husband, children, relatives and friends, and what all these have a right to expect and claim of her? If you will give a week's vigorous thought to these topics, you will by that time be able, with your practised vision, to penetrate somewhat the mist which overhangs the awful gulf at the bottom whereof the quintessence of these matters is boiling and brewing, and thereby come to a perception of the hopelessness of the task you undertook, when you ventured to attempt to decide what would be "exactly the right thing" for your compassionated friend to do. On the whole statement of the case, as you have given it, we do not think she could get a divorce, nor do we think it would be advisable for her to try to get one. Let her look to Heaven for guidance, and, in the clear light of her conscience, do her duty, leaving the result in the hands of Him who never errs.

SOUTH CAROLINIAN.—The quotation you inquire about are the closing lines of "Bertram's" autobiographical sketch, which occurs in Sir Walter Scott's "Rokeby," and runs thus:

> "And now my race of terror run,
> Mine be the eve of tropic sun.
> No pale gradations quench his ray;
> No twilight dews his wrath allay;
> With disc like battle target red,
> He rushes to his gory bed,
> Dyes the wild wave with bloody light,
> Then sinks at once, and all is night."

You might with propriety use this quotation in your oration for the purpose mentioned; but as a general thing, the fewer quotations the better, unless they spring spontaneous from your mind, and flow into your discourse with a naturalness and harmony which would make it seem as though they might have been a part of your original thought.

SAMSON.—The seemingly prodigious feat of the man who breaks a large stone with his fist is no great affair, after all. Anybody can do the same thing by pounding away long enough. These stone-breakers always wrap cloths around their fists, to protect them from being bruised and abraded. If a heavy bar of iron be suspended on a rope or chain, and beaten with a hammer for several hours, it will at last fly in pieces. The explanation of this is, that the jarrings consequent upon the blows finally overcome the cohesive power of the particles of iron. This is the the theory on which the sudden breaking of railroad-car axles, which seemed perfectly sound, is explained. And on this same theory can be explained the breaking of the stone beaten upon with the fist of the "stone-breaker." The successive blows finally overcome the cohesive attraction of the particles composing the stony mass, and it separates or "breaks."

W. G. L. says that everybody who can wield a slate-pencil in his vicinity are disputing about what eighteen and three-fourth pounds of butter would come to at eighteen and three-fourth cents a pound. He says almost everybody, whether man, woman or child, who "figures" at it, arrives at a different result, and in despair they have appointed him a "corresponding committee" to seek aid and enlightenment of the LEDGER. Were it eighteen pounds of butter at eighteen cents a pound, he thinks the combined arithmetical talent of the neighborhood would prove equal to the occasion, but "that confounded coming together of the *two* three-fourths" is too much for them. The problem seems so simple and easy to us, we cannot imagine how our friend's neighbors could be so puzzled by it; but according to custom, we will let the "LEDGER boys" send in their solutions of the question.

BROWN.—The person "given to making broad assertions" to whom you refer, is probably some waggish fellow, or practical joker, who delights in making people open their eyes wide with astonishment. There is no use in contending with him as to whether or not a one-pound ball will sink as deep (in *very deep* water) as a two-pound ball. When it came to the test, he would probably insist on your accompanying the balls down into the depths, to see with your own eyes whether one would sink farther than the other, or not. The fact is, that *any* solid iron ball would sink to the bottom of whatever pond, lake, or ocean it should be cast into.

MIRANDA.—You, the schoolmaster, and your beau, are all wrong in regard to the author of the expression "a bold, bad man." Neither Shakspeare, Milton, nor Burke, originated it. It occurs in Spenser's "Fairy Queen," and is applied to the Magician whom St. George and Una meet, under the guise of a monk. The phrase is "a bad, bold man," the usual transposition of the adjectives in the quotation being occasioned by the propensity to follow any example set, rather than take the trouble to go to original sources for correct models.

READER OF THE LEDGER.—It is difficult to make a person not familiar with such matters "exactly understand" what the duties of the "clerk" (as you say) of an ocean steamer are. He is called the *purser*, and has charge of all the ship's papers. He unites in his office the responsibilities of book-keeper and secretary, and is the general manager of all the "writing business" of the ship. He keeps the passenger list, and makes out the documents for the inspection of officers of foreign ports, &c., &c.

A. H. J.—It would depend, as to whether or not a gentleman could properly, and without giving offense, offer a lady money in church to put in the contribution box, upon his delicacy and tact in such matters. Some gentlemen could do it in such a felicitous manner, that the lady would feel complimented thereby; while others would do it so bunglingly and boorishly that a lady of delicate sensibilities would feel pained and insulted by the offer.

TROUBLE.—Disagreeable as you find boarding to be, you would probably experience much more inconvenience and discomfort in housekeeping. Two girls could not do many things indispensable in housekeeping, and to hire them done would cost you more than you can afford. The cares of a household would also interfere with your business avocations to an extent which might sadly lesson your incomes.

R. A. R.—A gentleman who accompanies a lady to a donation party should not offer her money to give to the minister. A lady of proper delicacy of feeling would be pained by such an offer. As a general rule, a gentleman should offer his left arm to a lady in walking, or in leading her down or out to dinner or supper.

FREDERIKA.—If gentlemen of your acquaintance never take any interest in you, we suppose the reason is that you are, *to them*, *not* interesting. Neither men nor women can love what to them is not lovable. When you meet your "counterpart," he will come down on his knees directly.

TUCKAHOE.—You have made a great mistake. We would warn you, in all kindness, against putting on such pretentious airs. When you *do* something of real value and worth, the world will recognize it. But the world cannot be bullied or scolded into the admiration of anybody.

STOPPER.—We do not believe in advertising for a wife or husband, nor in answering such advertisements. A girl is not only foolish, but cruel and unjust to encourage the attentions of a young man whom she does not love or like.

HOLLOWAY.—It would be quite proper when an intimate lady friend asks a gentleman for a lock of his hair as a keepsake, for him to have it placed in a locket, and present it to her thus, locket and all.

CHARLES S.—We can afford you no relief. If a young lady prefers one beau to another, we do not know as the unpreferred one can help himself, unless he sensibly makes up his mind to prefer some other girl to her.

C. B.—Divorces are speedily and easily obtained in Indiana, but we can't give you the cost of getting one, nor tell you the "code of practice" in relation thereto.

W. C. C.—It would hardly be judicious to send the young lady a declaration of love, in writing, unless you have reason to believe it would be favorably received by her.

A. R. B.—Despatches cannot be sent both ways through the Atlantic cable at the same time. If they can be sent one way with facility, we should be satisfied.

INQUIRER.—Henry the VIII. had six wives in all. He was a horrid old wretch. His last wife was a widow when he married her, and she made out to manage him.

E. E. C.—A *cornet* is an officer of cavalry, who bears the colors or ensign of the troop. He is the third officer in rank in the company.

M. S. H.—We do not believe in "dyeing the hair," and will not encourage the practice by publishing a recipe for a hair-dye.

NASHVILLE, Tenn.—It would be improper for us to state the ages of our contributors. Your estimate of Mr. Cobb is correct.

C. B. A.—Master your Latin and Greek grammars thoroughly, before being in a hurry to read Virgil and Homer.

V. C. J.—We do not care for translations.

⁂ *Several letters stand over to be answered in our next.*